

1744 THE *Rhemar*
DOCTRINE 9

OF 1720 +

Parts and Circumstances

IN

RELIGION

Laid open.

IN ANSWER to a SERMON of
Dr. Edward Synge, Lord Bishop of Rapho.

With this Title,
Eternal Salvation, the ONLY End and
Design of Religion.

The Nature and Obligation of Rites and Ceremonies,
Church-Articles, &c. are here put in a true Light.

Bronne K
By Peter, Lord Bishop of Cork and Ross.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N:

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DOCTRINE

TO



THOSE Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, which are the Self-same now, that they were when Holy and Vertuous Men maintain'd Them, against profane and deriding Adversaries; Her *own Children* have, at this Day, in Derision.

Hooker's Eccles. Pol: Book IV.

READER

IN the Account before the Lord Bishop of
Rapho's printed Defence of Drinking in Re-
membrance of the Dead, entituled, A Let-
ter about Drinking to the Memory of
King William; his Lordship says, That before my
Answer to him was publish'd, he was very desirous
to know my farther Thoughts concerning so
important a Matter as a Charge of † Idolatry :
But that when I comply'd, and sent him my
Thoughts in Print, In the midst of abundance
of Business he had not Time to read it.

This being, as his Lordship observes, a Matter of so great Importance, it must have been worth while in him, to have spared Time to read and consider whether his Arguments were not so fully Answer'd, that he should be oblig'd rather to a Revocation of what he had undertaken to defend, than to the farther publishing of it to the World. I could wish a Regard to Truth and the Souls of Men, had overcome his Resentments from those Expressions of Slight or Sharpness intermix'd in my Answer; and the Liberty I took of Endeavouring to

† My Charge is only, that it is in itself an **Idoltrous Act**, not *Formal Design'd* Idolatry.

place the Reasoning Part of his Discourse in a diverting Light ; especially, since it all arose out of the Subject it self ; and that I was led into it by the exceeding Weakness of such Arguments, as he thought Unanswerable. But, as I am sensible no Provocation, or manner of treating Me or the Subject, is a sufficient Justification of any Words or Expressions unsuitable to his Lordship's Person and Sacred Order ; so I plead them not, but do freely revoke whatsoever in my Reply may be deemed to be of that Nature : And, where this doth not remove any Offence it might have given, I am content all the Censure it occasions may center in me, and no way hurt either his Lordship, or the Doctrine I defend ; which wanted it not, but will clear up every Day the more it is oppos'd ; and receive new Light from every Objection, which is brought to Cloud and Obscure it.

And, now that I have, as much as in me lies, removed whatever might have given his Lordship disgust ; I beseech him to suspend all Prejudice, and consider Impartially, what hath been offered concerning the Profane and Irreligious Nature of that **Bealth**, which he hath hitherto Maintain'd with so much Zeal and Warmth : That he may hereafter as zealously Check and Discountenance it ; that he may own a Truth, which is never to be Evaded by any reasonable Answer ; and make a full and free Acknowledgement of so unjustifiable an Error, to the Glory of God, and of His Holy Ordinance ; and to the Shame of all Those who first set it on Foot with no good Designs ; who have Supported it, as his Lordship observes, for above Eleven Years ;
and

TO the READER.

and Teach it their Children, in order to transmit to Posterity.

I would likewise, in the most sincere and tender Concern for him, beseech his Lordship to make a publick Recantation of this whole Sermon, the only effectual way of healing the Wounds it hath given to Our Church. This will be infinitely more for the Quiet and Peace of his Conscience, in the End, than any Defence of it, by labouring for Evasions; giving all the Parts of it such Turns as they will not bear; and which will appear to be altogether strein'd, besides his first Intention, and the whole Scope of that Discourse. And, this I urge upon his Lordship for these Reasons,

First, Because, tho' perhaps the intire Labours of his Life can never undo all the Mischief that Sermon hath done; yet, this is the most effectual Means now left in his Power towards it. This will give an unsuspected Air of Sincerity to what he hath hitherto Wrote, very worthily, in Favour of our Rites and Ceremonies, and present Constitution; as also to his future Endeavours of that kind, whether by Preaching, or Writing, or Conversation: But, without it, be they ever so Zealous and Commendable, they may be look'd upon, by the Enemies and false Friends of the Church, to be no other than a great Inconsistency with himself; and will be always borne down by the great Weight Dissenters of all sorts will lay upon this remarkable Performance of his, to which they are all ready to Subscribe.

Secondly, Because a Man is never more subject to dangerous Errors in Religion, than when he ven-

tures to be singular in his Positions, and in the manner of conveying his Thoughts to the World. As for Instance, such as Establishing one Only End and Motive of Religion, peremptorily exclusive of all other Motives. Affirming, that tho' a Doctrine be in it self ever so True, yet, if there is not a plain Command from God, requiring me to believe it, it is no Sin to disbelieve it. Holding that such as are admitted to the Ministry, are to give their Assent to more Doctrines than other Members of our Communion. Maintaining that the Church cannot require an Assent to any Doctrines, as Necessary to Salvation. Promoting Distinctions of Parts and Circumstances; of Articles of Communion, and Articles of Peace; Similitudes of a Man, and his Garments, Golden-Apples, &c. These and such like are, at least dubious, and therefore a direct Transgression of his own Rule, viz. * That in Religion a Man ought always to express his Thoughts in the clearest and most determinate Manner he can. For, no other Reason can be imagined, why a Man should make choice of such Expressions as are doubtful, rather than those that are plain; except it be that he desires (by some at least) to be understood after a different manner from what he privately Means within himself; which sort of Collusion, or Dissimulation, as it is not easily excusable in any Case whatsoever; so in Matters of Religion it is altogether Wicked and Abominable.

* Plain and Easy Method, &c. Par. 48.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Because a Person's promoting Alterations in our Liturgy, Rites, or Ceremonies, Articles, &c. in his private Capacity, and upon the strength of his own Reason; and taking upon him to incline People to a Dislike or Indifference towards them, seems to be in the Church what the stirring-up the Minds of People to Faction is in the State. The first Motion, or Essay of this nature, ought to be to the Body of the Clergy in Convocation; where Matters being thoroughly Debated, he might have the concurrent Sense of his Brethren: Otherwise, 'tis setting up a Man's own private Judgment, in opposition to the whole Church; nay, and even to the Holy Ghost, for 'tis acting in his single Person against the well-weigh'd Resolutions of the Learned and Pious Fathers of the Church, Synodically Convened, when we may with just Grounds, presume that God is more immediately in the midst of Them.*

The last Inducement to a publick disclaiming of what he hath so openly Maintain'd and Abett'd, I shall offer his Lordship is this, viz. That his persisting in the Defence of an Health, which strikes even at the Vitals of Christianity; and his pursuing what is in itself a Levelling Principle tho' ever so well design'd, and directly destructive, not only of our whole Constitution, but of a visible Church in the World, may be no Diminution to his future Reward of those real Services he hath done, thro' the Course of a diligent Discharge of his Ministerial Function; and of the many more he may be yet the Instrument of daing in that Station to which he is, by the good Providence of God, promoted.

His Lordship will by this means intirely free himself from any Share in the Guilt of those Affronts and Indignities, Grievous Calumnies and Reproaches, which are daily cast upon such as appear in Defence of the Contrary Doctrines; of those Direful Curses, and unheard of Execrations, which they are so frequently loaded with; and of that Customary drinking of Confusion and Damnation to them, even by Name, upon publick Occasions, without reserve, and among Persons not of the lowest Rank or Station. Tho' this may seem a small thing, yet it is a weighty Consideration in it self, and great in the Account of God: For, tho' without question, his Lordship hath a just Abhorrence of all such Practices; yet, this cannot be deny'd, that as far as by Writing, or Conversation, he hath zealously promoted such Doctrines and Opinions as give Occasion and Pretence, not to say any degree of Countenance and Encouragement to those who are guilty of Them; so far he becomes Partner in their Sin. I pray God these, and other Considerations, which his own Mind must naturally suggest, may prevail with him, as much as in him now lies, to remove the Cause; and then those Effects and Consequences will fail.

(1)

THE
DOCTRINE
OF

Parts and Circumstances

L A I D O P E N

WHEN this Sermon, I have now before me, was first Preach'd, 'tis said there happen'd a great Concourse of *Dissenters*, who are *Immoderately* bent against our *Episcopacy*, *Confirmation*, *Liturgy*, *Rites*, *Ceremonies* and *Articles*, &c. as also of such who have but a *Moderate*, very *Moderate* Degree of Zeal and Concern for Them, i. e. for the whole Constitution of that Church, of which they are visible Members; and in the *Communion* of which they hope for Salvation. I need not tell you with what *secret Pleasure*, which disclos'd itself with Applause in their Looks, These receiv'd the agreeable Doctrine: Whilst the *True* and *Genuine* Sons of the Establish'd Church, were fill'd with Grief of Heart, Their Countenances fell, and discover'd that Surprise and just Indignation, which became a sincere and firm Adherence to that *PROFESSION* they were first

first receiv'd into by *Baptism*; which They approved of in their own Persons, and made their solemn Choice before God and the World in their *Confirmation*; which *Assurances*, nay, *VOWS* to Heaven, they repeated as oft as they have received the Blessed Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*: And, by which they have, from their Childhood, happily rejoy'd in all the blessed Means of Salvation, for their growth in Grace, and the increasing of all Vertue and Goodness in them.

This Sermon made a great Noise Abroad; one side spread the Doctrine of *PARTS* and *CIRCUMSTANCES* far and near, and made all their Advantages of that lucky Distinction. The other sort, who alone were disgusted, made such Representations of it as my Reader will see it deserv'd; for which Reason it became necessary for his Lordship to publish it, with an Intent * *ONLY* to put a stop to the false and altogether groundless Reports that have been spread Abroad of it. What are these false and altogether groundless Reports? namely, That the *Main Observation*, laid down for the Groundwork of that Discourse, was neither good Divinity, nor in the least deducible from the Text. That the *Four Inferences* made from it, have as little Truth in them as that Proposition from whence they are drawn; especially, in that universal and unfein'd Sense, in which they are positively asserted. That the Doctrine of *Parts* and *Circumstances* had a direct Tendency to vilify all our *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, and open a breach in

* ADVERTISEMENT.

our

our Constitution. That our Church was grievously wrong'd in that peremptory Assertion, That *She never had the least Thought that her Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies, Articles, &c. were Parts of her holy and established Religion,* and that she shou'd call them only *Circumstances*; when She never thought that they are no *Parts of Religion*; nor any where calls them by that *Invidious, Vilifying Name* there put into her Mouth. That our *Dissenters* are there furnished with an Argument for the Justification of their *Schism and Separation*, which can never be answer'd upon his Lordship's Principles. That the Similitude of a *Man* and his *Garments* is calculated to convince People that they may throw off the *Rites and Ceremonies* of the Church, as they please; and change them with every Turn of the Times. That the *Heathenish Fable of the Golden Apples*, directly insinuates all our *Christian Rites and Ceremonies* to be so many Rubs cast in our Way by the *Devil*, to hinder us in running our *Race to Heaven*. That in the midst of all these Insinuations against our *Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies*, there is not one single Expression dropt in favour of them, unless we except that remarkable Saying, p. 15. That in *MANY* Cases, lawful Authority *MAY* determine Circumstances; And that we *May* be oblig'd to yield Obedience to such Determination.

If these are the Reports that his Lordship would put a stop to, I am sorry to say, that not one of them is altogether *Groundless or False*; and that the Printing of his *Sermon* will appear

to be an ample Justification of the Veracity and Integrity of his Hearers who gave out those Reports. There is one Report more, added to all the rest, since the Publishing; namely, that his Lordship express'd himself more fully to some of those Points in the Speaking, than he hath done in the Print. I wish it had been foreseen and obviated in the *Advertisement*. For it being Reported with so much Positiveness; and the Reporters having done him so much Justice in other respects, I fear People *may* be inclin'd to believe it, till his Lordship asserts the contrary in express Terms, and without any Reserve.

The stripping that Discourse of all its *Clothing* and *Disguise*; and exposing all the *Parts* of it to a naked and open View, is to me an ungrateful Task; and I had no small Struggle with my self between a Reluctance to any Dispute or Controversy with a Brother, on the one Hand; and that Zeal I owe to Truth on the other. But the Obligation of Conscience I lie under to maintain the *Honour* and *Dignity* of our dearest Mother hath prevail'd, at a Season when she is unuaturally and ungratefully struck at by many of her own Children; who have suck'd her Breasts, and have grown up to Maturity under her tenderest Care and Management. And this I undertake the rather because, tho' all People see the main Scope and Tendency of that Sermon, yet they cannot discern the whole Contrivance; and all the Particulars which lie more cover'd, and capable of an *Evasion*, till Men come to a more distinct and near Consideration of them.

The

The Main Proposition laid down from the Text, *Matt. 19. 16.* is, *That the ONLY End and Design, which each Man ought to propose to himself in his Religion, is the Attainment of Eternal Salvation.*

This is asserted not only here as universally True, and with great Positiveness, so as to be made the Title of the Sermon, *Eternal Salvation, the Only End and Design of Religion*: But thro' the whole, peremptorily exclusive of all other Ends whatsoever, pag. 14. *This and none other is the main End and grand MOTIVE of Religion*: Again, p. 7. *The only Reason and Motive is this, and only this, viz. That God will Reward us in the Life to come.*

I believe every one, at first sight, sees how groundless and absurd this Proposition is, which his Lordship lays down as *Self-evident*, p. 4. even in that Latitude. For, if there are any other Ends and Motives of Religion at all as Grand, or Grander Motives than that, then that is not the *Only Motive* of Religion. I shall Instance in the *Glory of God*, which is fully and expressly propos'd as one great End and Motive of all Religion; and that both in respect of God, and Man.

First; In respect of God, 2 Cor. 8. 19. The Gospel is said to be preach'd for the *Glory of God*, and for that Reason, *Vers. 13.* the Preachers of it are call'd *The Glory of Christ*. Eph. 1. God is said to have *Predestinated* us to the Adoption of Children, i. e. to the Christian Religion, to the *Praise of the Glory of his Grace.*

Secondly,

Secondly, In respect of Man, *Phil. 2. 11.* the whole Confession of our Faith in Christ, must be to the Glory of God the Father. Nay, and *John 15. 18.* This is made by our Saviour himself the grand Motive of all practical Duties in Religion. *Herein is my Father Glorified, that ye bear much Fruit.*

And now observe the Two Demonstrations of this Self-Evident Principle; that Eternal Salvation, is the Only End of Religion.

First, *Because this, [Eternal Salvation] and none other, is the Main End and Grand Motive that is proposed to us by God himself.* The Consequence is thus; this is a Grand Motive, which God Proposeth to us; therefore, it is the only Motive a Man ought to propose to himself, and no other Motive whatsoever. That Eternal Salvation, is a Grand Motive Propos'd by God, no one ever yet doubted, and therefore wanted not all that proof; but that it is the only Motive, or that there is not any other great Motive proposed to us, I am persuaded no one ever said; much less ever undertook to Maintain before; and accordingly his Lordship found himself under a necessity of dropping the Word only here in the Argument, which was the only material Word that was to be proved in the Grand Proposition laid down in his Title-Page, and pursued thro' the whole Discourse.

If the Scripture says, *Phil. 1. 11.* that we must be filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, unto the Praise and Glory of God. And, *1 Per. 4. 10.* that we must be good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God, *Vers. 11.* That God in all things may be Glorify'd through Jesus Christ; and I from

from these and many other Texts to the same Purpose, shou'd make this ridiculous Inference, that therefore the *Glory of God* is the *ONLY* grand *End*, and *Design*, and *Motive* of Religion, universally and peremptorily Exclusive of all others; would not his Lordship wonder what strange Inferences I was to make from such a grand Principle? and what secret Ends I had to serve by it? and yet I might have done this with a better shew of Reason, than his Proposition will admit of. For that notable, remarkable Word *ONLY* quite spoils his *Sole* and *Grand* Motive of all Religion, and renders it a Principle intirely *Selfish*, *Mean* and *Abject*; fit only for narrow Spirits, dispos'd to do all for their own Sake, and nothing for the Love of God, and the Sake of his Glory; which was ever esteem'd the Highest, most Noble, and most Acceptable Motive of Religion; and for that very Reason so frequently inforc'd upon us in the Holy Scriptures.

And it is for this Reason, that it hath been a Question, especially among the Mystical Divines, Whether a Regard to escape the Damnation of Hell, and the saving of our Souls, may be even a joint Motive with the *Love* of God, and promoting of his *Glory*. 'Tis true, this is one of their elevated Notions, and with them a Condition of *Perfection* in Religion; and it may be an Extreme on the other Hand: but I believe this was never by any Man before so *totally* and *entirely* Excluded from being a Motive of Religion as it is by his Lordship, who doth not so much as give one Hint of it thro' the whole *Sermon*.

His

His Lordship's second Proof is, Because the *Prospect of Eternal Salvation is the only Thing sufficient to support a good Man under all the Difficulties which a Religious Course of Life may expose him to*; therefore it is the only Motive in Religion, and a Man must propose no other to himself but this alone. But surely not intirely exclusive of the Love of God; for with submission, The Love of God in *Rom. 8. 35, &c.* is propos'd as one of the strongest *Motives* of Religion, and sufficient to enable us to overcome all Difficulties. *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? shall Tribulation or Distress, or Persecution? &c.* And for this Reason *Love the Lord with all thy Heart*, *Mat. 22. 37.* is said to be the *First and Great Commandment*. And, *Rom. 5. 5.* all Evangelical Graces are resolv'd into the Love of God, *shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost*: And what therefore could his Lordship mean by so intirely and peremptorily *Passing over the Love of God and his Glory*, and setting up the Love of our selves for the Sole, and the Only grand End and Motive of all Religion?

If it is said, that the Love of God and his Glory is not an End distinct from Eternal Salvation, because nothing we can do, can be any real Accession to his Glory. I grant it, and then how will his Lordship like my laying down this Proposition in direct Opposition to his? the *Glory of God is the ONLY End and Motive of all Religion*; and then saying, that 'tis with this *View and Design*, and none other whatsoever, that every Religious Action ought to be perform'd. This shews the unreasonableness

bleness of making those Two one Motive, which God hath in so many Places of Scripture expressly distinguish'd; but if Men will joyn them, so they do not make either of them the *ONLY* Motive so peremptorily Exclusive of all other, I shall have no Contest with them.

I hope after these Texts, and the many more I cou'd produce, that his Lordship will not say the Glory of God is a secondary End or Motive subordinate to Eternal Salvation; especially since he will find this, *Rev. 15. 4.* to be the End and Design of the whole *Creation*; And if he but allow it even co-ordinate, then Eternal Salvation cannot be the *Only* End.

If his Lordship had but qualify'd this strange and unheard-of Proposition a little, and could have said that he meant the *ONLY* End and Motive, not exclusive of other Motives; but in Opposition to all *Worldly* and *Hypocritical* Ends and Motives, this would have been some saving to the surprizing Novelty of it. Or, if he had call'd Eternal Salvation the *Chief* End, or *Supreme* Motive of Religion, and of all Religious Actions; or the *main* End to which all others are subordinate, without expressly excluding them *Grand* and *Small*, thus much of the Sermon had passed without Notice. But unless it be the *Only* End, this *alone*, and *no other* whatsoever, what then would have become of the Four following Inferences built upon that one Word *ONLY*, as a corner Stone? and are all of them plainly levell'd, not at *Hypocritical*, *Unlawful*, or *Worldly* Ends and Designs, but at *Rites* and *Ceremonies*; and indeed

at every thing in Religion, which is not expressly in the Ten Commandments. And pray, from what plain express Scripture is all the Doctrine of that Sermon brought? Why, because a *Pharisaical Jew*, and *Hypocritical* too, as it seems by the Event, came to Christ and ask'd this Question, *What good Thing he should do, that he may have Eternal Life?* Therefore *Eternal Life* must be the *Only End* and *Motive of Religion*; and People must have no Regard for any *Rites and Ceremonies*, because God, in this Text, hath not made them necessary to *Eternal Salvation*.

From this Doctrine, thus Establish'd, says my Lord, several Inferences of great Moment and Importance, all against Rites and Ceremonies, may very clearly be drawn.

I. That the **ONLY Reason and Motive of EVERY Religious Action** ought to be, That God will Reward it in the Life to come. This is the **ONLY View or Design** with which every Religious Action ought to be performed.

Tho' here it is the only End, yet p. 8. it is said God himself proposes to us another End or Motive of Religion, at least in Conjunction with everlasting Happiness. Now you would think his Lordship was about to make some Apology for passing over the Love of God and his Glory. No, and therefore 'tis a selfish Principle still, viz. * *Our Welfare and Prosperity in this World.* Well, let us grant this other Motive

doth not destroy his grand Proposition as it really doth; yet what will he say to 1 Corin. 10. 31. *Whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God*; and to that other Text quoted by himself, Mat. 5. 16. *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven*? Is not here another End and Motive of our Religious Actions with a Witness? And can any thing be more directly contrary to these Texts than to lay it down as an establish'd Doctrine, that any other is the *Only* End or Motive.

But, good Reader, cease your Wonder, for here the Matter of so great *Moment* and *Importance* begins to open: The Scope and Consequence of all is this, If Eternal Salvation be the *ONLY* End and Motive of all *Religion* and *Religious Actions*, then you are not to regard any thing but what is *Necessary*, in order to that Salvation; and those only are to be called *Religious Actions* which are done in Obedience to a Command of God. What are properly these Religious Actions? † *Prayer and Praise*; Receiving the *Holy Communion*; and drawing nigh unto God in any of his *Ordinances*, i. e. in any that he hath expressly commanded, [but not in those *Forms* which go by that Name.] *Justice, Truth, Mercy, Charity; Temperance, Patience, Mortification, Self-denial*; These and such like, are *Commands* of God; therefore these are what he will Reward in the Life to come: Therefore since this Reward is to be our *Only* Motive, we are *Only* to mind

such things as are plainly Commanded, as what will Only be Rewarded. But for *Liturgies, Rites and Ceremonies, Forms of Ordination, Confirmation, Consecration of Bishops, and of Administration of the Sacraments, &c.* these are not Commanded by God, they are the Commands of Man alone; therefore the Observance of them is the Observance of *Circumstances*, and therefore the performance of these can be no *Religious Actions*; nor can they further or promote our *Salvation*, or the *Reward* of another World.

If I have *Rais'd* my Reader's *Astonishment* instead of *Laying* of it, I must yet still farther observe, That the great Point of Doctrine, and grand Principle of this whole Sermon, is, That the surest Way to Eternal Salvation, is meanly to Esteem and to Disregard the Performance of any thing but what is expressly commanded by God; or a Consequence from Scripture so plain, that it is impossible for you to evade it: Tho' it is a Principle directly destructive of all *Evangelical Holiness*, and of all *Growth in Grace*, and *Progress* in the practice of *Vertue and Piety*; and a Doctrine most pernicious and fatal to the Souls of Men. Because, without a conscientious Regard to *Rites and Ceremonies*, and a Religious Observation of such Things as are no where Commanded by any direct Precept; or immediate Consequence, Men cannot rightly Discharge even those things which his Lordship allows to be Commands of God, and Necessary to Salvation, and Parts of Religion; Nay, they cannot partake of the Administration of the Sacraments,

FOR

nor can they draw nigh to God in any of his Ordinances. And therefore his teaching People to distinguish so nicely between what is the exprefs and positive Command of God himself in His Ordinances, and what are the Commands of Man, tho' pursuant to a Power given them by God; to raise in them an esteem of the One, and difesteem of the Other, that they may value the former *Only*, and *disregard* the latter; as it proceeds upon a Principle in it self not True, so is it *Dangerous* and *Destructive* of all Religion and Vertue. And therefore considering that fixed *Aversion* and *Hatred* all the *Dissenters* already bear to our whole Establishment; And that Coolness and Indifference towards it, which hath infected Multitudes of those who yet live in outward Communion with no other Church, (a sort of Apostacy, no way to be accounted for upon the Principles of any Religion, *True or False*) his Lordship shou'd have bestow'd his Pains and Labour the quite contrary way. Namely, to raise in People, a good Opinion of our *Liturgy*, *Rites* and *Ceremonies*; to shew 'em the Usefulness and Excellency of them in order to Edification, and the discharge of all Christian Duties; and the indispenfible Obligation lyes on Men to the Observance of them, as being the *Mediate* Commands of God, and not to be Disregarded, because they are not his *Direct*, *Express* and *Immediate* Commands.

His Lordship could not, in all the Bible, have found a Passage more directly opposite to this great Principle of his; and to the constant Application he makes of that Text,

Where there is no Law, there is no Transgression, than this from whence he took his Text. For after *Christ* had answered the young Man as to those Points which were Necessary to Salvation, namely, the *express Commands of God himself*, such as my Lord calls *Parts of Religion*: And that the Man justify'd himself by saying, that *All these* he had kept from his youth up, i. e. All Commanded Points, and Necessary to Salvation; He then bids him *Go and Sell all he had, and give to the Poor*, i. e. to do what there was no *express Command* for in the Law of God; and moreover *Christ* told him, that this was to be perform'd in order to Perfection in Religion. If the young Man had learn'd the Doctrine of this Sermon, wou'd he not have ask'd immediately, *How* was that any *Command of God*? and have reply'd upon our Saviour, that *Where there was no Law, there was no Transgression*? Tho' this was no direct Command in the Law of God, yet *Christ* observes how difficult it was for that Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven who declin'd observing it. And I may with great Truth make the same Application of this to *Rites and Ceremonies*, Forms of Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, namely, *How hard it is* for any Man to attain *Eternal Salvation*, who is once brought to a *Mean Opinion and Contempt* of them? and who hath laid it down for a Principle, that he will have but little Regard to any Performance, but what is *Expressly and Directly* Commanded by God.

If his Lordship says here, that he did not design all this, I am very glad of it, and shall

shall readily attribute it all to Mistake and Inadvertency. But then it ought to be consider'd, that this is no other than taking the Fault off from himself, and laying it upon the Sermon, which is all along calculated for this alone, and can design nothing else; every Thing hitherto leads to it; and what is thus far insinuated, is only a Foundation for what is asserted more openly, and with less Reserve in the three following Inferences.

II. The second Inference carries the Point one Degree farther. *When any one attempts to bring another over to the Profession of the true Religion, it ought to be with this, and NO OTHER Design, namely, That he may promote and put forward the Salvation of his Neighbour.*

Leave out the Words *NO OTHER Design*, which make this likewise a downright Erroneous Proposition (because the Salvation of our *Own Souls*, as well as the *Love of God* and his *Glory*, may come in for a very good *Design* or *Motive* in the Conversion of a Person from a *False Religion* to the *True One*) and you would wonder there should be such a chain of Consequences to infer what no Body ever yet deny'd, *viz. That a Man ought to Design his Neighbour's Salvation, when he endeavours his Conversion*; but this would no way answer the main scope of the Sermon, it must be *Only* with this Design, and with *No other Design*, and with this Design *Alone*; and *when-ever* he attempts it. The constant Repetition of those restrictive Terms thro' the whole Discourse,

course, is to distinguish the Commands of God *Himself*, which only is True Religion, from every *thing* else, which hath in Truth but a false Colour and Appearance of it.

His Lordship hath already, under the *Last* Inference, plainly described what he means by *True Religion* in this, He means what is *Truly Religion*. *i. e.* what God Commands, and not Man; These are *Prayer and Praise; Justice, Truth, Temperance, Patience, &c.* And by a *Religious Action* he means every Thing that is done in Obedience to any Command that is plainly God's. Therefore, as you are to endeavour the Converting a Man only to what is *Truly Religion*, so you ought to do it with no other Design but the *Salvation* of your Neighbour's Soul; that is, you are to Convert him to such Points alone as are necessary in order to it, and can only entitle him to the Reward of another World, *Praise, Justice, Temperance, &c.* and if you do not Convert him to these, and these alone; but do likewise labour to Convert him to meer *Circumstances* (stay good Reader, till we come to the next Inference, and then you will understand what sort of Trifles those are) then you meet with the severe Imputation of *Abominable Wickedness* and *Hipocrisy*, and with the Name of an *Hard-hearted Pharisee, &c.*

If his Lordship will but make this *One, Only* Concession, namely, That our Establish'd Religion is the true Religion; and that 'tis to this Religion we are to make Converts, 'tis past denying who those *Hard-hearted Pharisees* and *Abominable Hipocrites* are, who make their
Con-

Converts *Twofold more the Child of Hell than themselves*, Mat. 23. 15. and if this seems any injurious straining of his Lordship's Sense and Meaning, then take the Sentence immediately following this Quotation. *And by the Ways that many have taken to make Converts [to the true Religion] or rather Hypocrites, it seems to be too too Evident, that their Design hath been more to advance and strengthen a PARTY in this World, than to save the Souls of Men in the next.*

If one of the Ways of making Converts to the true Religion, or rather *Hypocrites*, levelled at here be the *Sacramental Test*, as I fear it is, which hath been the Occasion of bringing many of the Separatists into actual Communion, against their Judgment and their Consciences with that Church, which they renounce and abhor; then indeed it cannot be denyed, but that these sort of Converts are *Pharasaical* and *Abominable Hypocrites*. But how is this chargeable upon the Party who promoted and obtained that Clause, and are still for continuing of it? Did they foresee there could be such Monsters in Christianity, as in Effect, to renounce their own Religion at every Turn that an Employment offered, and become actual visible Members of another, which they themselves daily brand as *Popish* and *Idolatrous*? And that too, more especially on account of the Manner of Administring that very Sacrament in which they occasionally Communicate. When Experience shew'd that the Heart of Man was capable of such profound Hypocrisy,

crisy, the plain and obvious way for preventing of it was put in practice, namely, that of the *Schism Act*, the Design of which was to make Men true and sincere Converts, or no Converts at all; and if there is any room still left for Evasion, and for making any more such Hypocrites, I leave to the World to judge at whose Door the Fault is to be laid.

As to the other *Ways* that many of the Party here meant, have taken to make their Converts to the true Religion *Hypocrites*, and *two-fold more the Children of Hell than themselves*; or to speak plainly, as to the Methods used by them for converting of Separatists to the established Church, for this is the Point; it must be confessed there is another sort of People who use *different*, very *different* Ways for that Purpose. I shall give a few Instances on each side; but shall take Leave to throw out that Word **Party**, that Things may appear as they are in themselves; and that unprejudiced Persons may judge impartially who they are that best deserve those *severe Imputations*, and are most liable to that *grievous and heavy Charge*.

Or

They who wou'd make Converts to the true Religion by taking off the Test, or Repealing the Schism Act; preposterously <i>weakening</i> of the Church, under a Notion of	They who are for continuing those good Laws; well knowing from sure Experience, that whenever any ONE of the Sectaries come to have an equal Share in the State with the
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strengthening the State : Thus by Degrees the Separatists may come to establish what *They* think the *true Religion*; and as they did before, use many *Hard-hearted* ways of making us Converts unto them.

They who have ever obstructed all *LEGAL SECURITIES* which have been promoted for our primitive and holy Constitution; and under the Name and Notion of *TOLERATION* and Regard to tender Consciences, never fail to run in with all Measures for the Support and Encouragement of Schismatics and Hereticks. And, who under the Disguise of a meek and peaceable Spirit, keep up an endless Debate and perpetual *STRUGGLE* of the Sectaries with the Established Church, to get the upper hand: Who will never suffer

the Church, there can be no Quiet or Safety for it: And that it must be destroy'd, whenever the united Power of them ALL together becomes superior to it.

They who, though they are for following to all our Separatists free and unmolested Liberty for the Exercise of their own false Religions, yet wou'd gladly procure such *Laws* as shou'd put it out of their Power to threaten the true one with *Danger* and *Ruin* at every Juncture which shines upon them with a favourable Aspect; and whenever the bright side of the Cloud is towards them. And who ever since the Reformation have been labouring for such a Security as this for the Church, but have been always defeated by the *restless*
vicio-

this Contention to cease, but make it the Care and Labour of their Lives to transmit it down to Posterity.

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They who would Convert Schismatics by soothing them in a fond Opinion of their Safety and Innocence, in the midst of Guilt and Danger. Who even rebuke such as preach against the deadly Sin of Schism, lay open the horrid Nature of it, and do but offer to make any Application to those, who are so notoriously guilty of it, that nothing can excuse them but invincible Ignorance.

violent, furious Opposition of your Quiet, Moderate, Meek-spirited Men; such as a bound in Love and Charity for other Communi- ons, but have no Mercy on their own: And in the midst of all that yearning of their Bowels over the Sectaries, seem to want the natural Affection of legitimate Children towards their own Mother Church.

They who look upon all this conniving, softning, palliating, soothing, flattering, &c. to be the greatest Cruelty to the Souls of such as they would convert; as well as Matter of great Offence and Scandal to all who are already converted. Who think these Methods of Conversion have more of the Wisdom of the Serpent in them, than of the Innocence of the Dove; and therefore go a plainer

They who are for con-
 vining at this barefa-
 ced Violation of all
 the Precepts of the
 Gospel for *Peace* and
Unity; for softening
 all the erroneous Opi-
 nions of Separatists,
 and passing over in
 silence all their illegal
 Practices. Whose con-
 stant Cry is, *It is not*
seasonable; to do it now
 is to play a monstrous
Part; as if *Schism* were
 a Crime to be whisper'd
 only, and exempt from
 that Precept Cry aloud;
 and *Lift up thy Voice*
like a Trumpet. And in
 short they who are so
 tender hearted that
 they cannot touch the
 Sore for fear of ma-
 king Men complain;
 and therefore are for
 lulling them asleep,
 and deceitfully skin-
 ning over a festering
 and canker'd Ulcer.

They who would
 make Converts to the
 Established Religion,
 by lessening of it in

plainer Way to work.
 Namely, by taking all
 Opportunities of con-
 vineing Men of the
 heinous Nature of the
 Sin they wou'd con-
 vert them from. By
 lamenting and bewail-
 ing the deplorable
 Condition of all our
 Separatists, whose case
 in short is this; They
 have cut themselves off
 from a pure and un-
 tainted Part of the Ca-
 tholick Church, and
 are not become Mem-
 bers of any other Part;
 They have renounced
 Communion with us,
 and are not themselves
 owned by any other
 reformed Church in
 the World.

They who well know
 all things of this nature
 to be no other than
 giving up our whole
 Esta-

the Opinion of the World; and under a Notion of magnifying the *Commands of God himself*, as what is only and alone necessary to Salvation, representing its Articles, Rites and Ceremonies as *unnecessary, trifling and contemptible*; things changeable at Pleasure, and of no Regard or Consequence; thus reviving that old Clamour against the Church, *Scripture-Commands. The Law of God. The Word of the Lord.*†

Establishment, and betraying the best constituted Church in the World into the Hands of its Enemies; and therefore warn all People of the Iniquity and mischievous Consequences of all such preposterous Concessions, as the very things which hinder the Conversion of *Schismaticks*. And therefore do on the contrary labour (without any mixture of secret Reserves in what they say and write) to shew the *primitive Excellency* of our Church, the *Purity* of its Doctrines, and the indispensable *Obligation* which lies on them to comply with its Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies, in order to the Salvation of their Souls; and how that by the *Commands of God himself* they are bound to a *religious* Observance of them.

They

† See this at large, *Hook. Eccles. Pol.* Book III.

They who are might and main preparing the Way for what goes under the specious Name of a **COMPREHENSION**. But is in Truth, like to prove no other than opening a Gap wide for all *Hereticks*, *Schismatics* and *Infidels* to enter into the Pale of the Church; not as Converts, but as Thieves and Robbers. Such a Comprehension as shall break down all its Hedges, bring its Inclosures level with the Ground, that it may be laid out for a **COMMON** to be grazed indifferently by Sheep or Goats. And accordingly do talk with much Zeal and Gravity of *Comprehending*, those who they know, by sad Experience, will never be *Comprehended* upon any other Terms than totally *Overturning* the goodly *Structure* of our *Constitution*, and *Erecting*

They who are gladly for such a Comprehension as shall receive into the *FOLD* of the Church all our Separatists who are willing to enter in by the Door, leaving only their Schismatical or Heretical Principles behind them; and bringing in with them no more than a *weak Judgment*, and a *sincere and tender Conscience*. They who are zealous for such a Comprehension as should admit of grafting all our *Dissenters* into that goodly *VINE* which God's own right Hand hath planted in these Kingdoms; tho' it were with lopping off such Bows as may be spared without injury to the main Stock. But, not such as shall let in the *wild Beasts of the Field* to devour and destroy it Root and Branch. And accordingly, are not for Reconciling quite

Opposite

a **Babel** of their own
in the place of it.

Opposite Opinions in
Religion; blending of
Contraries; and for
contriving an **hideous**
Composition of a Con-
stitution, made up
of monstrous *Contra-*
dictions and *Inconsisten-*
cies.

They who by these
and such like Methods
do give up the Cause
of the Church; and
yield **Themselves** to
be in the wrong; and
indeed take off the Guilt
of *Schism* from those
who separate, and lay
the unsupportable Load
upon their own *Hard-*
hearted naughty Con-
stitution, which so cru-
elly and cauelessly ex-
cludes such tender Con-
sciences as cannot com-
ply with those Rites
and Ceremonies, which
are but meer *Circum-*
stances, and no Part of
Religion.

They who being
thoroughly sensible, that
the horrid Guilt of
Schism, with all its
dismal Train of Con-
sequences to Church
and State is, in the
Sight of God, surely
chargeable, either up-
on those who *Separate*;
or upon those who
make that *Separation*
necessary; do there-
fore place it at their
Door, where it ought
to lye; and where it
will be found at the
last Day. Who ap-
peal to God and the
World, whether the
Church requires any
sinful **Term** of Com-
munion? Whether she
hath not *Power* to de-
cree *Rites* and *Ceremo-*
nies?

nies? And whether she hath not *Authority in Controversies of Faith*? And who by this Means avoid giving just Offence and Scandal to the Members of their own Communion; but awaken the Consciences of such as renounce it: So that Converts may be made not by going over to them, but by bringing them over to us.

They whose Mouths are all of a sudden full of Commendations of the *FOREIGN* Reformed Churches, sounding out their Praises; and warmly arguing them to be as *safe* a Way to Salvation, and as *Pure* and *Perfect* as our own.

They who knowing that of the Foreign Churches to be at first a Case of unavoidable *Necessity*; and that they are still under the Power of *Prejudice* and *Prepossession*: Do therefore hope that God will ratify and confirm all those Religious Acts of theirs, which are done in an *Extraordinary* Way, till in the Course of his Providence that *Necessity* and *Prejudice* are removed; and that they are brought to a Sight of that

that fundamental Error they are in, viz. the want of EPISCOPACY. And accordingly make it their Business and Aim, not to continue Men in that Ignorance, and keep them still blindfold; but rather to open their Eyes that they may discern their want of that strict Principle of UNITY with the *Catholick Church*; and of that SANCTION which is expressly promised only to those Ordinances, which are performed in the regular, and Ordinary Way of God's Dispensations.

They who set up the Law of the Land for the *Intire Adequate Rule* of Obedience to Governors; and accordingly upon some View or other, never fail to Preach and Propagate the Doctrine of *Resistance* in every Reign: And ingross it

They, who besides the *Law* of the Land, take in the Law of God for their Rule; and accordingly are Loyal upon a Scripture Principle, and are not the less so when they are not such as the King delighteth to Honour. Who are the constant

so wholly to themselves, that they are filled with Resentment if any of the other side should but pretend to it in any Degree.

constant Maintainers of that truly Gospel Doctrine of Obedience to Governors, and especially to *Kings* and *Queens*. Infomuch that they would not save their *Liberty*, or *Property*, or *Lives*, nay, nor the Establishment of the best *Religion* in the World by Methods of Sedition or Disloyalty. And therefore have, in all times of Tryal and Exigence, been found the constant Stay, and last REFUGE of *Monarchy* and *Episcopacy*.

They who would invite Converts over from *Dissenters* by reviling and oppressing their own Clergy, and treating them with manifold Indignities. Who are for running down all University Education, and taking the Management of Youth intirely out of the Hands of all who are in holy Orders.

They who Reverence and Support their Clergy, as Persons at whose Hands they receive the blessed Sacraments; and upon whom they have their whole Dependance for partaking of Divine Ordinances, and all the blessed Means of Salvation. Who know the great Value and Consequence

quence of those *Foundations* of Learning, which preserve us from a general Ignorance and *Barbarism*; and to which are owing all the Politeness, and Refinements of the Age.

They who do all this, and much more than I can describe, for the Support and Countenance of *Schism* and *Schismatics*; but not by any professed and open Declaration in Favour of them, or their Principles; but by many indirect and plausible Ways, which tho' seen by all, yet do ever leave Room for Evasion, and a Turn towards something that is good; and at worst is resolved at last into *Excess* of Charity, or *Mistake* in Opinion. But however this grand Design is pursued and carried on by all that Variety of Artifice, which runs

They who look upon all Practices of that Nature in the midst of *Constant, Zealous, Solemn* Professions of great Regard and Kindness for the Church, to be no other than *betraying* it with a *Kiss*.

They

thro' the whole Conversation of those deluded Persons, who affect rather the Character of *Temper* and *Moderation* towards *Dis-senters*; than of *Truth* and *Fidelity*, and an upright unbiass'd *Zeal* towards that Communion they have chose to live and dye in.

I might add to this, They under whom all the *Enemies* of *Reveal'd Religion* take Shelter; and who are courted, caressed and flatter'd by *Deists*, and *Socinians*, *Freethinkers*, and all Ranks of *Infidels*. Who glory in a profane and irreligious *Health*, as their distinguishing *Badge* and *Character*; and do such *Honours* to the Statues of the *Dead*, as were customary among the *Heathen* in worshipping their *departed* Heroes. Who upon *Occasion* can easily mistake **UNSOUND PRINCIPLES OF REVOLUTION,** for

They who are the common Mark of all such Mens *Indignation* and *Fury*; and are left to sustain the Storm alone, whenever the joint and united Force of *Schism* and *Infidelity* attempts to enter at those Breaches in our Constitution, which are made by Men of a *Levelling*, *Compounding*, *Extending*, *Comprehending* *Genius*.

SOUND REVOLUTI-
ON PRINCIPLES.

Whomingle *Damnation* with their Liquor, and crown their Cups with *Confusion*. Who breath out † **Revenge**, and **Ruin**, and **Desiru-
tion**, and in the Face of God and Man, do solemnly bind 'em up-
on their Souls.

That Word **Party**, and the severe Animad-
versions upon it; and particularly that of their
making their Converts *Twofold more the Child of
Hell than themselves*, drew me into this Digressi-
on. And now since it is past denying that *One*,
or the *Other* of these two Sorts of People are there
branded with that Name and Character: If it
should chance to be those on the *Right Hand*,
have they not Reason to complain of such
Treatment? especially from a Person of *Learn-
ing* and *Character*; and who hath this remarka-
ble Saying, * *Whosoever Disputes in Defence of
Religion, is bound to do it with all the Calmness and
Gentleness that possibly he can. Sharpness and An-
ger, Heat and Violence do commonly raise Mens
Passions, and thereby obstruct their Reason, so as to
make them much less capable than otherwise they
wou'd be, of a clear and solid Conviction, &c.*

What do you imagine is at the bottom of
all this Indignation? And why do they make
their Converts twofold more the Child of Hell

† Words in some late Associations, * Bp of Rapbo's Serm.
than

than themselves? Because, like the *Pharisees*, they Convert *Dissenters* only to *Circumstances*; and lay too great a stress upon meer *Rites* and *Ceremonies*; which are no *Parts* of Religion, nor *Any way necessary* to Salvation. This indeed were a just Censure, and *woe unto us Pharisees, Hypocrites*, if we omitted the weightier Matters of the Law, *Judgment, Mercy* and *Faith*: No, we teach our Converts as our Saviour did, that *These they ought to do*, and not to *Leave the other undone*: And what shall we say to those, who industriously by many ways, insinuate that Men *may leave the latter undone*?

So then the direct Application of all this long Encomium upon *Calmness* and *Gentleness* is, that our *Liturgy, Rites* and *Ceremonies* ought to be very coolly and carelessly Defended; and that all the Zeal with which, as *Hooker* says, * *Holy and Vertuous Men have defended them*, is *Pharisaical* and *Hypocritical*. But sure it is Good to be zealously Affected, always in a good Thing, Gal. 4. 18. and if the *Liturgy, Rites* and *Ceremonies* of our Church are good Things, then those Vertuous and Holy Men were not to blame in that Zeal and Warmth with which they have defended them, and in rebuking our Modern *Pharisees*, i. e. *Separatists* with *Sharpness*, for their Obstinate and Schismatical rejecting the Observation of them. And, I pray God his Lordship may in Time consider, how different a Spirit those Holy Men were of, from that which moved him in the close of this Head, to put our Church and Sectaries all upon the same Level; solemnly lamenting that the *Chri-*

stian Church came to be so rent and divided into *Sects* and *Parties*, without the least Intimation in favour of our own. And, alas! for the *Christian Church* (ours being one of these *Sects* and *Parties* into which it is divided) there is very little Hope (*without the Extraordinary Goodness and Mercy of God do interpose*) of its ever being again restor'd to that Union which it so happily enjoy'd in the first Propagation of Christianity. Hard-hearted and Hypocritical *Pharasees* as Men are! Why do they shew so much *Sharpness* and *Anger*, *Heat* and *Violence* for meer *Circumstances*? Why will they insist so rigorously upon *Trifles*; and will not part with them in order to a *Comprehension* of all those other *Sects* and *Parties* of the *Christian Church*, who are by that means excluded; tho' they have all the *Parts* of Religion as well as we, and are now willing to be comprehended, and make one Fold under one Shepherd?

III. The Third Inference is, *That nothing ought to be receiv'd as a PART of Religion, but what is NECESSARY to Salvation. i. e. in his Lordship's own Words, p. 16. what is Absolutely Necessary, Perpetual, Unchangeable; And here p. 12. Every Thing which the Law of God HIMSELF, and not Man, Requires. Any Thing which is not contain'd in the plain Law of God himself, and not indispensibly necessary to Salvation, is but a Circumstance and no Part of Religion.*

Now my Reader thinks that his Lordship hath distinguish'd all Religion into *PARTS* and *CIRCUMSTANCES*. No such thing; this

this were a Concession wou'd Ruin his whole Scheme; and yet I know you are now wond'ring what else he can possibly mean! Why, he means that there are no *Circumstances* at all in *Religion it self*; or that there is no *Religion in Circumstances*: They are Things in the *Outside* of Religion; or *About* Religion; or *Belonging* to Religion; but have *Nothing* in them of Religion; and in short, you may make any Thing in the World of them but a *Part* of Religion.

Had his Lordship design'd no more than to teach People to make a difference between the *Essential* or *Fundamental Parts*, and the *Circumstantial* Parts of Religion, and apply'd it right, it might have pass'd as having some Meaning in it: Tho' even this is the old Puritanical Distinction levell'd at all our Rites and Ceremonies; * and at the *Power*, or *Christian Liberty* of the Church to appoint them, and require Obedience to them. Only they worded it with more Softness and Modesty, namely, Matters of *Substance*, and Matters of *Circumstance*; granting they were all *Parts* of Religion, and disputing only whether the Churches appointing any other than what are already in the Gospel was not making those things Parts of Religion, which were no Parts, and so *Adding to the Laws of Jesus Christ*. Accordingly their constant Cant was, *They are Devices of the Brain of Man; God teacheth them not; away with them therefore out of the Church; Away with the Star of Reason and Learning, and give us the Sunshine of the Gospel.* †

* See Hook. *Eccles. Pol.* Book 3.

† Hook. *Eccles. Pol.* p. 151.

Besides the evil Aspect, and dangerous Tendency of this way of speaking, you already see how affectedly Trifling and Groundless this Distinction is, which so totally, professedly, and peremptorily excludes our *Liturgy*, *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, and whole Constitution of our Church, from the *Name* or *Notion* of Religion; a way of speaking so intirely New and altogether his Lordship's own, that in his Sense of it, I am perswaded it never was heard of before the preaching of his Sermon.

That Distinction is founded upon this very wrong Supposition, That nothing which God Appoints can be a *Circumstance*, and nothing which Man Appoints can be a *Part* of Religion: Whereas there is neither of them True, for under the old Law, many Things *purely Circumstantial* were appointed by God; and so under the Gospel; such as *Entring into our Closets*, and *Praying in private*, Mat. 6. 4. *Bowing the Knee*, Phil. 2. 10. *Uncovering the Head*, 1 Cor. 11. 5. 7. *Singing*, James 5. 13. *Avoiding vain Repetitions*, Mat. 6. 7. And this his Lordship must never deny, who says, p. 12. *That the particular Form of Words, in which we offer up our Devotions, is but a Circumstance.* Then, tho' Prayer is a *Part* of Religion, yet the Lord's Prayer is but a *Circumstance*; nay, our Saviour's own Prayer, *John* 17. was but a *Circumstance*; the Psalms and all the Prayers in the Bible are but *Circumstances*, tho' dictated by the Spirit of God. Again on the other Hand, not only the *Matter* but the *Form* of the Apostles Creed is a *Part* of Religion, tho' not in the Bible, and ever esteem'd so; and the Observation of the

the Lord's Day is undeniably a *Part* of Religion, tho' of Man's Appointment; nay, tho' the Observance of another Day of the Week is one of the Ten Commandments. So that whether we speak of the Laws of God, or the Laws of Man, with Relation to the Church, some Things in them may be Matters of greater Weight and Substance, and some of them of less Consequence and Circumstantial only. And even a Circumstance commanded by God is a part of Religion, as *Hooker* observes. (Book 3. p. 145.) *If the Authority of the Maker do prove unchangeableness in the Laws which God hath made, then must all Laws which he hath made, be necessarily for ever permanent, tho' they be but of Circumstance only, and not of Substance.* So far was that great Man from allowing the Distinction in his Lordship's Sense.

Thus it is with the Laws of the Church enjoining Rites and Ceremonies; some relate to meer Circumstances, as the *Ring*, and joyning of Hands in Marriage; the Hour of publick Prayer; the Place where a Church shou'd be Built; the Use of the Surplice; and such like. Others to Matters of greater *Weight* and *Consequence*, as the Building of Churches for the Worship of God; The Form of publick Worship to be performed in them; The Form and Manner of Administring the Sacraments, and Confirmation, Consecration of Bishops, &c.

Now, whether they are of one kind, or the other, that by the Sanction either of the Universal Church, or of a National, they, as they have, always been esteemed, are with
great

great Truth and Propriety of Speech call'd *Parts* of Religion, will appear from these Reasons.

I. *First*, Because *Rites* and *Ceremonies* are necessary to Religion; it cannot subsist without them, or have any visible Being in the World. There could be no Worship of God at all, without some Form of Prayer, either *Premeditated* or *Extempore*. There could be no Administration of the Word and Sacraments without some particular Mode and Manner of Performing them; nor could there be any Order or Regularity in any Religious Performance without some Rule for it: And for this very Reason Dr. Hammond says, † *The Government of the Church is a considerable PART of Religion, because it is as necessary to the Being and Preservation of a Church, as preaching was to the first Propagation and planting of the Gospel*; and adds, *That it Wou'd be no less than Fury for any to hope for the Duration of a Church or visible Society of Christians, without this grand Necessary*. And so * St. Austin affirms, *Nullam Religionem neque veram, neque falsam, sine Ceremoniis posse Consistere*. And therefore what is so Necessary to the very Being and Discharge of Religion, doth very properly come under the Notion of a *Part* of it. So that the strict and narrow Notion of a *Part* of Religion, in his Lordship's Sense of it, holds only with respect to the *Invisible Church*, strictly call'd Christ's *Mystical Body*; but is entirely Groundless, with respect to the *Visible Church*, which owes even its Visibilty and Be-

† *Ham. Works*, Vol. I. p. 397. * *Cont. Faust.* c. II.

ing, as such, to Rites and Ceremonies. And therefore all the Uses and Inferences which are made of that Distinction of Parts and Circumstances, still I say, in his Lordship's Sense of it, from the former to the latter, are of most pernicious Consequence, tending to undermine all Religion; destructive of all true Piety; and fitted to obstruct all growth in Grace, and Advancement of all Vertue and Goodness in the World. It leads directly to that fatal and grand Error of the *Muggletonians*, who by a detestable Affectation of separating all Circumstances from Religion, and sticking to what they conceive to be strictly the *Parts* of it, have in truth, no Religion at all left. And therefore the Opinions and Consequences directly flowing from this Distinction, all Christians ought to be aware of, who have any Regard left to their Eternal Salvation.

2. Because Christ, who knew that Rites and Ceremonies must necessarily make up a great Part of Religion for the support of a visible Church, left a delegated Power for the appointing of them with his Apostles and their Successors; call'd therefore in Scripture *Ambassadors, Overseers, Rulers*. Accordingly St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7. 18. made *Ordinances* in the Churches, about Things in their own Nature indifferent. Titus was to *Set in order the Things which were wanting in Crete*, Tit. 1. 5. not Things plainly commanded in Scripture, for then there was no Need for this Precept, nor indeed of any other general Rule for the Exercise of their Power. But general Rules are given them for their Direction in all their Ordinances; namely,

ly, That all Things should be done to *Edification*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. to *Decency and Order*, 40. and to the *Glory of God*. And Obedience and Submission to these Rulers of the Church is strictly required. 'Tis for the Administration of this Power more especially, that the more immediate Presence and Assistance of the Holy Spirit is promis'd. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*, Mat. 18. 20. And again, *Lo I am with you even to the End of the World*. For which Reason the first Ordinance made by the Church, *Acts* 15. 28. runs in this Style. *It seemed Good to the Holy Ghost and to US*, thereby asserting the Divine Authority of their Decrees, as being from the Holy Ghost, tho' made by Man.

And now can any Consequence be more Natural from hence, than that the *Liturgies, Rites and Ceremonies, &c.* of the Church, which are founded upon Scripture, and have the Holy Ghost for their Author, are Parts of Religion? Is there not a Religious and Conscientious Obedience and Submission to be paid to them? And is it not for this very Reason that *Schism* is a Sin of that enormous and crying Nature; because opposing the Power of the Church in these Things, is opposing God and his Laws? and defeating, as much as in them lies, all the Ends of a visible Church of Christ upon Earth? Is it not upon this very Principle that all the Fathers of the Church have argued against those Schisms, which have been made in it? because, tho' Points of Discipline and Ceremony are in their own Nature indifferent,

different, not expressly commanded by God ; yet they are his *Mediate* Commands, and what is so, becomes a Part of Religion, as every Thing is, which by a Sanction from God is bound upon the Consciences of Men, tho' by the Mediation of his Ministers : Nor are they ever the less so for being Mutable, because the Obedience and Submission due to them, when appointed, is immutable as the Laws of God himself; and 'tis only by being annull'd that they can return into their former Natural Indifferency. Accordingly St. *Augustin* says, (Epistle 86.) That *Where the Scripture appointeth no Certainty, the Use of the People of God, or the Ordinances of our Fathers must serve for a Law*, i. e. for an express Law of God, for he judgeth the Ordinances of the Church to be of *Apostolical Authority*. And hear the Sense of the judicious *Hooker*, from whom I borrow'd that Quotation, (Book 3.) speaking of our Obligation, even from the Laws of God, to obey the Ordinances of our Mother the Church ; He says, *Let us not say we keep the Commandments of One, when we break the Law of the Other ; for unless we observe both, we obey neither — the Laws thus made, God himself doth in such sort Authorize ; that to despise them, is to despise, in them, Him.* Again, *If they have God himself for their Author, Contempt, which is offered unto them, cannot chuse but redound unto him.* And makes this Conclusion, *That obeying them, is obeying God.* So little did that great Man think of this Doctrine of Circumstances.

But

But you will say all Matters of Discipline and Ceremony can be no *Parts* of Religion, because a Man can be a *Christian* without them. Then read the learned *Hammond* on that Point, Vol. I. p. 397. who owns a Man may be a Christian without them, but says withal, that it is no otherwise True, than *As to want some Limbs, or to abound to Monstrosity in others, is yet reconcilable with the Life and Being of a Man.* And now you see this Distinction of Parts and Circumstances leads directly into that desperate Opinion, which Many begin now to grow very fond of, *viz. Of the Sufficiency of being a Christian at large* in order to Eternal Salvation; which hath not the least Foundation of Truth, but in Cases of absolute, unavoidable Necessity, as *Hammond* observes, only where a Man is *Immur'd*, or in a *Wilderness*; and that Case he says, *There is no doubt the Use of the very Sacraments, Instituted by Christ himself, wou'd not be necessary to Christianity*; and therefore no *Parts* of Religion in his Lordship's Sense of the Word.

3. In the third Place I must observe how this Distinction, which thus totally excludes all Rites and Ceremonies from the *Name* or *Notion* of Religion, goes upon a Supposition, that all Things necessary to Salvation are so plain and obvious in the Scriptures, that it is impossible for the meanest Capacity to be mistaken in any one of them. There might be some *Use*, and less *Danger* in this Distinction, if all Matters of Faith and Practice were so indisputably plain and obvious, that there could be no Doubt or Controversy about them.

But

But on the contrary, we find by sad Experience, that many of the most fundamental Points of Religion, are deny'd by some, and perverted by others; and that false and erroneous Opinions prevail concerning Things, which, to Men of Sincerity and Knowledge, seem plain and undeniable. What Remedy hath God provided for this Blindness and Obstinacy of Human Nature? Is it not the Judgment and Decision of good and learned Men, and particularly of those Rulers and Overseers of his Church upon all Points contain'd in Scripture, whether more Expressly or by Consequence? And is not this the Reason of the Governours of the Church reducing all Things relating to Salvation to a Certainty, by *Liturgies, Rubricks, Homilies, Articles and Canons*? And are not their Determinations upon the Sense and Meaning of Scripture in all Things properly call'd *Parts* of Religion? And what other Tendency can this invidious Distinction have, but all at once to dissolve this admirable Frame of our Establish'd Church? and leave a Latitude for every private Judgment to form Opinions to themselves of what is, and what is not a *Necessary Part* of Religion; and by that Means render them subject to infinite Error and Confusion, and to run a manifest hazard of their Salvation.

4. We are to consider, that if the light of Nature, could have inform'd us in all Matters of Religion, we should have had no *Revelation* at all; this leaves us to our *Selves* wherever the light of Reason is a sufficient Guide. Now

all Matters relating to the Worship of God and Government of the Church, and all Things relating to Faith and Practice, which wanted Revelation, are accordingly reveal'd to us; and all the rest is left to the Light of Nature, and best Reason of Man, influenc'd by the secret Concurrence of God's Holy Spirit: And since Reason is from God, as well as Revelation, whatsoever is thus Founded is in great Propriety of Speech, a part of Religion; it is commanded of God, and to reject and disobey it, is to disobey God. From whence you see another evil Consequence of that Distinction, that it leads People into a Contempt of all Moral Religion, in which the very Life and Substance of it consists; and teaches Men to despise all Things not *Expressly* in Scripture, tho' agreeable to *Right Reason*, and the general Rules and Examples of Holy Writ; most consistent with *Order* and *Decency*; most for Edification of Souls, and the Glory of God; of least Offence to all sincere and well-meaning Christians; consonant to the Opinion and Practice of the Primitive Church; and handed down to us from thence thro' every Age since Christ.

5. We must observe that there is a great Ambiguity in this Word *Necessary* to Salvation, upon which my Lord founds his Distinction, and lays such a Stress thro' this whole Sermon. Some Things are necessary in their own *Nature*; and some Things which are not so in their own Nature, may become so by Accident. And even of the first kind there are degrees of Necessity: As *first*, the *Fundamental* Ar-

Articles of Faith and Practice *Expressly* contained in Scripture; and even these are not necessary to Salvation, where there is not Opportunity or Capacity for them. *Secondly*, Points less Fundamental, which are deduceable only by fair and plain Consequence; and for these we are to be determin'd by the Opinion and Practice of the Church all along; and the Judgment of the Pious and Learned Fathers of it; and these are likewise necessary in their Degree, and a Man runs a manifest hazard of his Eternal Salvation, tho' he hold all the former, and reject the latter; or indeed any of them. *Thirdly*, All Things relating to Government and Discipline, Ordain'd by the Church, and for Performance of the Worship of God; founded on General Rules and Examples of Scripture, the Opinion and Practice of the purest Churches, and the best Reason of Man; under the Influences of the Holy Ghost. These likewise are Necessary to Salvation, tho' not simply and absolutely in themselves, or by necessary Consequence from God's particular Commands; yet, as being pursuant to his general Commands, and by his Authority taken into Religion for such Purposes as are necessary to it, but no Provision made for them in his express Word. So that the Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies of the Church are as necessary to the Salvation of its Members, as their partaking of the Sacraments, and all other Divine Ordinances; as necessary as Obedience and Submission to the Laws of God; as necessary, as their being Members of the visible Catholick Church, which they cannot ordinarily

be, without being Members of a particular Church ; and as necessary as it is to avoid the deadly Sin of *Schism* and *Separation* from the Church of God. This is a great Degree of Necessity, and so great, that People may forfeit their Eternal Salvation for want of not thinking these Things necessary enough : And a Man may perish for want of a due Regard to what is necessary in a lesser Degree ; at the same time that he affects the Observance of those Things which are call'd Necessary by way of Excellence, and not exclusively of these Things, without which, Religion cannot so much as subsist. And therefore that Distinction, which reduces all these Kinds and Degrees of Necessity to the first Head only, and directly and plainly insinuates the *No Necessity* of all the rest, opens a fair and easy Gap for all manner of *Heretical* and *Schismatical* Opinion.

2. Here I must observe, either the *Artful Contrivance*, or rather grievous *Overfight* and *Mistake* of this whole Sermon, which all along opposes the two *Extremes* of these *Three* to one another, but makes no Provision at all for Things in the second Degree of Necessity. On one side his Lordship reckons up the Parts of Religion thus, *To Love God ; to Fear, Worship, and Serve Him ; to be Just, True, Peaceable, Humble, Charitable, Sober, Temperate ; to be receiv'd into the Church by Baptism, and Afterwards to partake often of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ ;* this is the whole Sum of what his Lordship calls *True Religion*, necessary to Salvation, unchangeable, &c. several Times over. To these he opposes, p. 12. the

the *Hour* of Publick Prayer; the *Place* of Publick Worship; the *Form* of Words in which Men should offer up their Devotions; the *Posture* of Body to be observ'd in them, and such like. In the first his Lordship proceeds not to one Instance beyond *Moral Duties*, and the *Two Sacraments* for true Religion. So that he leaves Episcopacy; the two Orders of Priests and Deacons; Confirmation; Baptism of Infants; the Power of the Church for Spiritual Discipline and Government, and for appointing Rites and Ceremonies for Administration of the Sacraments, and other Ordinances of God, &c. either to be dropt intirely, or to pass for Things meerly Circumstantial, *i. e.* that have nothing in them of Religion: Had his Lordship proceeded to one Instance beyond the Sacraments, it would have destroy'd his whole Scheme. This Opposition of the two Extremes is so often repeated, and every part of this Sermon so openly and plainly levell'd, I hope not with Design, at the whole Doctrine of our Church, in all Instances, excepting only that of the two Sacraments; that I look upon his Lordship bound in strict Justice to declare himself, fully and publicly to the World, how many of these and such like Points he owns to be true Religion, and which he will have meer Circumstances, *i. e.* no Religion at all.

6. Another Reason I shall give, why *Rites* and *Ceremonies* are *Parts* of Religion, tho' of *Human* Appointment, is because our Saviour himself look'd upon them as such, by observing those Rites and Ceremonies of the *Jewish*

Church which were not commanded by God ; and that in order to the *Fulfilling* of the *Law*, and particularly the *Feast of Dedication*, *John* 10. 20. And in *Mat.* 23. 23. where he pronounces a *Wo* to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* for not observing the *Weightier Matters of the Law*, *Judgment*, *Mercy* and *Faith* ; He positively asserts the *Obligation* lay upon them to pay *Tyth* of *Mint*, and *Annise*, and *Cummin*, tho' they were *Instances* not commanded in the *Law* ; and tells them, they were not to *leave them undone*.

The last thing I shall observe to this purpose is, That it is matter of indispensable Duty and Conscience in the *Successors* of the *Apostles*, *Governors* of the *Church*, to pursue the *Power*, and observe the *Rules* laid down for them in *Scripture* ; and by that *Authority* to appoint such a *Liturgy*, such *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, &c. as are most for *Decency* and *Order*, for *Edification* of *Souls*, and the *Glory* of *God* ; of least *Offence* to the *Churches*, and which come nearest to *Scripture Examples*, and *Primitive Practice* ; together with such *Church-Articles*, and *Decisions* in *Controversies* of *Faith*, as are most agreeable to the whole *Tenor* of the *Gospel*. This we think already perform'd, and that too not without the more *Immediate* * *Direction* and *Influence* of the *Spirit of God*. Now all these become *Parts* of *Religion*, not only as they are *Ordained* by a *Lawful Authority* deriv'd from *Christ* ; But as they are most *Eligible* in *Themselves*, and in their own *Nature* ought to determine

* Act of Parliament in the 2d of *Edw.* vith. The *Liturgy* is said to be Composed, *By the Aid of the H. Ghost.*
the

the Judgment and Choice of such as have Power from Christ to *Ordain* Them. So that even that Notion, taken altogether for granted, That all Rites and Ceremonies are *perfectly Indifferent* before they are Ordained, will not hold; for this is but saying in other Words, that it is of no Consequence to Religion, or the Worship of God, what Rites and Ceremonies are appointed. Much more groundless then, and more pernicious it must be to maintain, that they are all *perfectly Indifferent*, and no Part of Religion, even *after* they are *Ordained*, which is the Doctrine of that Sermon. Now that the *Rites and Ceremonies, Articles, &c.* of our Church are of that Nature I have described, hath been sufficiently made to appear by many Pious and Learned Men: And this is the very Ground of all that Zeal and Learning, which hath been laid out in the Defence of them. So that tho' it might be said in the *General*, with some colour of Truth, That Rites and Ceremonies are *alterable*, yet, the Consequence will not hold, that therefore those of our Church *May* or *Ought* to be alter'd; for it wou'd be, not only an inexcusable *Levity*, but a great Sin to *Change* or *Alter* them for the worse; and a grievous Abuse of that Power lodg'd in the Church. And if so, then how great a Violation of Conscience must it be in any *single* Person, in his own *private* Capacity, and upon the strength of his own *Judgment* to ring Changes and Alterations in the Ears of all People, and Dispose them for parting with such Rites, &c. as have all the above Conditions; and for the Reception of others,

others, which may appear to have none of them. And this is the very Judgment of *Q. Elizabeth*, and her Wise Parliament. *A Form sound in it self, and profitable to the People, may not be alter'd without great Decay of the true Honour of God, and Discomfort to the Professors of the Truth of Christ's Religion.*

By what hath been said, my Reader is prepar'd to judge how injurious, not only to the whole *Constitution* of our Holy Church, but to all *Religion* in general that *Similitude* is, by which his Lordship explains and illustrates this Distinction; namely, That of a *Man* and his *Garments*. It must be confess'd this comes up fully to all the Intents and Purposes of this Sermon, and is calculated to answer all the Ends and Designs, which can possibly be aimed at by it; for 'tis certain the *Garments* are no more a part of the *Man* who wears them, than the Stick he carries in his Hand, or the Ground he walks on: Nay, we should be thought to speak *affectedly* and *Improperly* if we should call them even the Circumstances of an *Human* Body. If he had allow'd *Rites* and *Ceremonies* to be to Religion, but as the *Hair* or the *Nails* are to the Body, something arising from Religion, and such a necessary Appendage of it, that if those in Being are par'd off, others by a Course of Nature must arise in their stead; this would have been less invidious, tho' it wou'd not have come up to the Truth, nor to that juster *Similitude* by which Men of great Judgment and Piety have chose to illustrate this Matter. And particularly * *Dr. Hammond* who

* Tra. of Fund.

by the *Vitals* of Religion understands the express or plain Commands of God; and by that of the *Outward Members* describes all things relating to the Discipline of the Church and External Worship, founded on *General Rules* and *Examples* of Scripture, and the *best Reason* of Man, assisted by the ordinary Grace of God. And what that learned Man observes with respect to particular Christians, holds as to the Church the visible Body of Christ, which may by these be either preserv'd in a *just Proportion* and *Comeliness* of all its Parts; or else be render'd *Monstrous* and *Deformed*.

This Similitude of his Lordship's is a Strain far beyond that even of the *Puritans* in † *Hooker's* Time; who then it seems went no farther, in their Distinction of *Rites* and *Ceremonies* from the Fundamentals of Religion; than to liken one to our ordinary *Garments*, and the other to *Rings, Bracelets* and *Jewels*. And can we help wondering at this Similitude which is calculated to gratify our modern *Separatists*, who he can't but be sensible renounce and explode our *Rites* and *Ceremonies*; and would be better pleas'd if he had found out some yet more odious Comparison for them.

The Notions rais'd by this *Similitude*, and the Application of it are so very obvious that they cannot fail to strike upon the Mind of every one who hears it: Namely, That all *Rites* and *Ceremonies* in general, and consequently ours in particular, are mean and despicable Things; that as a Man is perfect without his Cloths, so he may be a compleat Christian

† *Hooker*, p. 131.

without any of them; That 'tis no way material to a Man's Eternal Salvation what Garb of Religion he puts on, whether that among *Separatists*, or in the *Establish'd Church*; for his only Care and Caution is, that he communicates among those who have the Parts of Religion, so he himself hath them it is no Matter; That every one may please his own Fancy or Humour, and cut his Coat according to his Cloth.

'Tis true his Lordship mentions the change of all Things he calls Circumstances to be made by Authority. But mark how 'tis usher'd in, *As by lawful Authority they are or may be appointed; SO being subject by the same Authority to be CHANGED and ALTERED if there be a just Reason for it*; What then? the Inference he makes is, Then they are Circumstances and no Parts of Religion. But the plain Insinuation is, That they Ought to be chang'd and alter'd; and that there is a just Reason for it. What is this but disposing Men to throw off the present Garb of the Churches of *England and Ireland*, and reconcile them to a more fashionable One? For (hear what follows) as the Cloths a Man wears may be alter'd or chang'd as the Season of the Year, the Custom of the Place, or any other Rule to be observ'd in such Cases, without any Damage to the Man himself; So, even so all Things that are Circumstances, in his Lordship's comprehensive Sense of the Word, may be Alter'd and Chang'd without any Damage to what he calls *True Religion it self*, of which as yet he hath specify'd
nothing

nothing but *Moral Duties*, and the *Two Sacraments*. If there is a Reason for it, you may throw off the Creeds as you do your Shoes and Stockings, they are at best but Forms. You may throw off the *Common Prayer* and *Litany* as you do your *Doublet* or *Cassock*, 'tis all human Invention. You may give up the Orders of *Priest* and *Deacon*, *Confirmation*, *Infant Baptism*, the *Power of the Keys*, &c. and hurt Religion no more than you wou'd your Body by casting off a loose Coat from your Shoulders; For where are these the *Immediate Express Commands of God himself*? nay, by the same Rule you may strip Religion of *Episcopacy* too, as your self of a Shirt, if there be a good Reason for it; for you know, tho' near is my Shirt, yet nearer is my Skin: All Things may be sacrific'd to tender Consciences but what is true Religion *it self*; And as for Rites and Ceremonies, Articles, &c. you may pull them all off as you do your Hat in a Compliment.

By stripping Religion thus *Bare*, and paring off from it every thing that is not so expressly, plainly, and fully commanded by God himself; and so indisputably, that there is no room left for the *Light of Nature* and *Best Reason of Man*, improv'd by *Learning*, and assisted by the *Holy Ghost*, to deduce or explain it, and set it in a clear Light: And, by thus rigorously and peremptorily excluding all Things else from the Name or Notion of Religion; tho' the Design may be, by this Means, to shew it to greatest Advantage in its Genuine and Native Beauty; yet the Effect and Consequence

quence is, That Men reduce it to nothing; it shrinks away, and they do but starve it to Death. And this brings to my Mind a Passage his Lordship must have heard, if he was not an Eye-witness of it; namely, of a *Quaker* who, not very long ago, enter'd the Cathedral of *Cork* in the Time of Divine Service, with nothing on his Body but one only Garment, which cover'd him all over; and while the † Minister was preaching in Defence, as I take the Story, of our *Liturgies* and *Ceremonies*, the *Enthusiast*, all at once threw off that Circumstance of a Cloak in the midst of the Congregation; crying out against the Preacher, and saying that *He himself came to Teach them the Naked Truth*. Now, as extravagant as this seems, the Case is but too parallel; and tho' it is a *Lively*, yet it is a *Sad* and *Melancholy* Emblem of this Doctrine of Circumstances, which his Lordship pursues, not only in his Sermon, but on other Occasions.

Upon this Principle, establish'd by this Distinction, and illustrated by the Similitude of a Man and his Garments, His Lordship * justifies our Separation from the Church of *Rome*, and our rejecting their Errors of *Praying to Saints*, *Worshipping Images*, &c. because, *Supposing they were all Lawful, and that we had no other Objection against them but this One, namely, That They are impos'd as Parts of Religion, this alone would be Ground enough for us to reject them; i. e. quite frees us from the Guilt of*

† The Reverend Dr. Rowland Davies, now Dean of *Cork*.

* Pag. 13.

Schism in breaking off from them, and setting up a distinct and separate Communion of our own.

A *Part* of Religion, with his Lordship, is an *Express, Plain, Undeniable* Command of God Himself; *absolutely and indispensably* Necessary to Salvation. And, now you already see that we are so far from being justify'd by this Argument, that it renders our whole Reformation one grand and inexcusable Schism.

For *First*, Suppose the Church of Rome had only imposed upon us the Observation of the *first* Day of the Week; the *Form* of the antient Creeds, and particularly that of the Apostles; *Episcopacy*; the Orders of *Priest* and *Deacon*; *Confirmation*; *Infant Baptism*, &c. as *Parts* of Religion, tho' there are not such express Commands of God himself in Scripture for them, nor are they so absolutely Necessary to Salvation as the Two Sacraments; could we have justify'd our Separation from it for that Reason? For surely all these and such like are *Parts* of Religion, tho' they do not all come within his Lordship's Notion of that ambiguous Word *Part*, or *Necessary* Part, or unchangeable Part, commanded by God himself, &c.

And pray, my Lord, who is the proper Judge which are the *Parts* of Religion, and which not? the Church, or is every private Member to judge for himself? Therefore suppose the Church impose a thing in its own Nature indifferent; for instance, the *Use* of the *Surplice* in the Administration of the Sacraments; nay, and should require it as a Duty by Consequence from *Revel. 3. 4.* and those
several

several other Texts, which speak of the Saints appearing in the presence of God in *White Rayment* : Tho' I should see this not to be so directly infer'd from Scripture as to be a plain Command of God, yet this would not justify my Separation from the Church upon that Score. And so in other Instances, of things seemingly indifferent, tho' they were in the Determination of the Church impos'd as not altogether indifferent, but as agreeable to general Rules of Scripture, and deduceable from thence by a remote Consequence, yet this would be no just Ground to rend the Church, and make a Schism.

Secondly, If the Church of *Rome* had imposed Rites and Ceremonies, against which there lay no other Objection, but that they were *Impos'd, i. e.* from being no Parts of Religion, should be made Parts of Religion by the Power of the Church, and Obedience to them required as such; neither would this be a justifiable Cause of Separation.

But if, as it is in the Church of *Rome*, these indifferent Things are for their *Nature* or *Multiplicity* such as lead to Superstition, and are destructive of the True Life and Substance of Religion; or that Things plainly contrary to the Law of God are Impos'd; Things, as his Lordship speaks, *False* and *Unlawful* and *Wicked*, so as that Men cannot continue in Communion without being guilty of Sin: this, and this only I take to be a justifiable Ground of Separation. And therefore my hearty Request to his Lordship is, That he would leave the Controversy between us and the Church of

Rome

Same upon the same Foot that all good and learned Men of our Church have plac'd in. Namely, We separate from the Church of Rome, because it enjoyns Things Contrary to the Law of God, and Destructive of true Piety and Holiness; and all our Sectaries separate from us without Colour or Excuse, because our Church requires nothing Contrary to the Law of God, or Destructive of true Piety and Holiness.

As this great Principle of his Lordship's involves us all of the Reformation unavoidably in the guilt of *Schism*; so it is a full and ample Justification of all who separate from our Establish'd Church. *They who dissent from it, says my Lord, endeavour to turn this very Argument upon us.* Yes verily they do, and he hath render'd it unanswerable; Well, how do they turn it? They sometimes *Allege*, (mark how softly he touches them) *that they have the same Ground to refuse kneeling at the Holy Communion, &c.* Their Argument against us upon his Lordship's Ground, stands thus.

First, The Church imposes many Things as Parts of Religion, which are No Parts. Not only the Instances I have already recited, Episcopacy, Observation of the first Day of the Week, &c. but the Three Creeds; the Descent into Hell; the Canon of Scripture; Visibility of the Church; Lawfulness of Requiring Oaths in Judicature; nay, the very Doctrine of the Trinity; Eternal Generation of the Son; Perfection of the Two Natures in Christ; with many other particulars in her Articles and Homilies; and yet not one of these are Parts of Religion

on in his Lordship's Sense of the Word, not only in this Sermon, but quite thro' his *Plain and Easy Method*, whereby a Man of, &c. in which among many other Things to this Purpose, he hath this remarkable saying, *Par. 4. If a Doctrine be in it self never so True, yet if God hath no way laid any Command upon me to believe it, in this Case, not to believe is no Sin; for where no Law (or in other Terms, no Command) is, there is no Transgression, that is to say, no Sin, Rom. 14. 15. nor consequently can this my want of Belief be any bar or obstruction to my Salvation.* Which saying is in the same Paragraph apply'd expressly to Doctrinal Truths, and Articles of Faith. The Consequence is clear and unavoidable; therefore 'tis not only Lawful, but necessary to separate from the Church, for *This alone, says my Lord, is sufficient.*

Will not the Separatists now turn the Argument upon us thus? Doth not a Bishop of your own lay it down for an Establish'd Principle, founded upon a *Plain and Rational Distinction*, and illustrated by a remarkable Similitude, That if a Church imposeth any Thing as a Part of Religion, which is not the plain Command of God himself, *manifestly Necessary, perpetual, unchangeable; nay, Absolutely, indisputably Necessary*, as appears by his own Instances, 'tis a sufficient Ground of Separation? Therefore * Put a way from you

* By the one only stroke of that Grand AXIOM [of sticking to the Commands of God] Hooker observes, Book 3 and 4. They, i. e. the Separatists, think to cut off every Thing in our Church, for which there is not a plain and express Comend in Scripture,

all your Articles, Injunctions, Rubricks, Homilies, &c. and every Doctrine which hath not those Conditions, and then we will join Communion with you: For what have these Things to do with Religion; or indeed any Opinions or Determinations of Fathers or Councils? Give us the plain Commands of God himself, and none but what are so plain, that the meanest Capacity cannot mistake them. Doth not the same Bishop insinuate, p. 4. That this is the very Practice of the Jewish Doctors, who gave themselves a Liberty of advancing divers Opinions, and introducing several Practices under the Name of Traditions, that were not warranted by the Word of God?

Again, Secondly, The Establish'd Church imposes Rites and Ceremonies, which are Things Indifferent and Unnecessary in themselves; and requires a Necessary Obedience to them. It makes them necessary Conditions of Communion; so that from being *No Parts* of Religion, the Church makes them *Parts*; and in point of Obedience, thus puts them upon the same Level with the Commands of God, by requiring a like Religious and Conscientious Observance of them: Therefore Separation from such a Church is Justifiable. His Lordship's Answer to this, gives us all up, clinches this old beaten Argument of Separatists, and leaves no room for the least Evasion. *The Insufficiency of this Argument*, says he, *will immediately appear, if it be considered that our Church never had the least Thought of imposing her Ceremonies as PARTS of Religion, but only as CIRCUMSTANCES of it.* But where doth the

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Church

Church give the least Countenance to this new Notion of confining the Parts of Religion to the Practical Commands of the Gospel, and the two Sacraments? Are not all her Articles and Homilies, and Liturgy, and Rubricks, a full Confutation of it? Or who is he that peremptorily asserts, That our Church calls all her Rites and Ceremonies, and Liturgy, by the contemptuous Name of *Circumstances*? and that she should say, That they are no Parts of Religion, even after they are Ordained and Appointed by Her? when our Holy Church never spoke such a *Word*, or ever had such a *Thought*; but hath declar'd Herself fully to the quite contrary; and in those very Quotations produc'd by his Lordship, asserting † that *Every National Church hath Authority, i. e. from God, to Ordain Ceremonies or Rites of the Church.* And * that *tho' the keeping or omitting of a Ceremony, in it self consider'd, i. e. before it is so Ordained, is but a small Thing; yet the wilful and contemptuous Transgression of a common Order and Discipline, is no SMALL Offence before God,* Then surely it is a GREAT Offence before God, i. e. a great Sin. So that a Man is to make a strict Conscience of them; and what a Man is to make a Conscience of, is a Part of Religion; and for the very Reason assign'd by the Church, because tho' they are *Ordained* of Man, yet 'tis for the more immediate Worship and Service of God, and pursuant to express Command and Authority from him.

† Art. 34. * Discourse of Cerem. prefixed to the Common Prayer.

His Lordship will say that there is this difference in the Case still, *viz.* That the Church of *Rome*, upon his Reasoning, imposes Things indifferent as the Commands of God, and as in themselves *Necessary* to Salvation; but our Church imposes them as Things in their own Nature *Indifferent*. Yes, and a material Difference it is; but entirely lost and confounded in those two ambiguous Words, *Parts*, and *Circumstances*. Whereas if his Lordship had distinguished plainly as he shou'd have done, and said; That Rites and Ceremonies, *before* they are ordain'd by the Church, are no Parts of Religion, and call'd them by what vilifying Name he pleas'd; but that *After* they are ordain'd for the Worship of God, and by his Authority, that they then became Parts of Religion, as requiring a Religious and Conscientious Observance of them, then all would have been clear and right. But by stigmatizing them both *Before* and *After* indifferently with the Title of Circumstances; and excluding them so peremptorily without this Distinction, from any Share in the *Name* or *Notion* of Religion, he hath furnish'd all *Dissenters* with a Topick fertile of Objections against our whole Constitution.

If all Rites, and Ceremonies, and Liturgies are *equally* Circumstances, both *Before* and *After* they are so ordain'd; and *equally* no Parts of Religion, and *no way necessary* to Salvation, which is his Lordship's own Expression; then say the Sectaries, who each of Them think they have all the Parts of Religion, We are as truly Members of the *Catholic Church* as

those of the Establish'd Religion, for we differ only in *Circumstances*; while we retain all the *Parts* of Religion, we may chuse our *Circumstances* where we like them best. Nay, if we go from one Communion to another, we do not change our Religion; and Occasional Communion is only throwing off the Garb of Religion for an hour or two; and what harm is there in a change of Garment, only to go to Court with, and get a Place there? And, why will the *Church* or *Church men* lay so great a Stress upon such Trifles as are *no way Necessary* to Salvation, and make no *Alteration* in Religion? Why are Things *no way Necessary* to Salvation, made *necessary* Conditions of Communion? And why are People excluded and cut off from the Body of the Church, declar'd Schismatics, and determin'd Excommunicated for Circumstances, *i. e.* for Trifles, *i. e.* for Nothing?

Is it not an avow'd Principle of one of your own Bishops, explain'd and pursu'd thro' a whole Sermon, publish'd in *England* and *Ireland*, That what is not a *Fundamental* Part of Religion, is no Part at *all*; And therefore if a Church imposeth any Thing as a Part of Religion, tho' she declares it not to be a fundamental, Necessary, and immutable Part, yet 'tis a just ground of Separation? Nay, and if the Church should declare her *Liturgy*, *Rites* and *Ceremonies* not to be impos'd as *Essential* Parts of Religion, (which she hath done) and that they are no Parts of Religion or Religious Worship in any Sense even *After* they are ordain'd, (which she no where hath, and I
am

am perswaded never will) yet if Consciences are tender enough to fancy they become Parts of Religion, by being Constituted and Ordained, which is their last Result when all other Arguments fail them, they are guilty of Sin if they communicate; they must, upon this Principle, and ought to continue separate. And why then should not all, who have any Moderation or Temper towards *Dissenters* left, promote such a Constitution and Establishment as may make nothing a necessary Condition of Communion but what is a Part of Religion in his Lordship's strict Sense of the Word, and make the Pale of the Church wide enough to comprehend all sorts of Circumstances? For 'tis no more necessary for Members of the same National Church to agree in these, than 'tis for all Men to wear the same Cloaths.

And now observe how his Lordship evades these and the many more absurd and groundless Consequences directly flowing from his grand Principle, and unanswerable upon it; only by saying, *It will not in the least follow, but that lawful Authority MAY, IN MANY CASES, (mark the Expression) prescribe and determine the Modes and Circumstances of Religion; And that we MAY be obliged to yield Obedience, and be conformable to such Determination.* Why then in many other Cases lawful Authority may not prescribe; and we may not be oblig'd to a Conformity. And particularly on his Lordship's Principle, where a Church doth not call all her Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies by the *Odious* Name of *Circumstances*; and doth

not declare all Points of *Doctrine*, besides the Practical Precepts of the Gospel, and the Two Sacraments; and all her Liturgy and Ceremonies, even after they are Appointed and Ordain'd, to be no *Parts* of Religion in any sense of the Word.

My good Lord, If all these Things are such meer Circumstances, *i. e.* *Trifles* as you explain it, is not this a substantial Reason why you should not change them for those who break the Peace of the Church, and set up separate Communion for such Circumstances? Will not they ever have the same Objection against all other Circumstances? Who will have no Circumstances but of their own chusing; and whose fixed Principle it is, that a Churches prescribing of those Circumstances is a sufficient Ground for breaking the Unity of the Church, the Peace of the State, and all Christian Charity and Communion?

IV. The last of his Lordship's Inferences is, That all Questions and Disputes concerning such Things as are **NO WAY NECESSARY TO SALVATION**, ought, as much as is possible, to be avoided, and excluded from Religion.

This Proposition runs smoothly, and upon a transient View, looks with an Air of Truth and Innocence; but upon second Thoughts, when you find that by such Things as are *No way necessary* are meant, as well *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, as all Things else in Religion for which there is not an indisputable Command of God Himself: When 'tis plain, I say that
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These alone, and Only these, and Nothing else whatsoever but These can be meant; as appears from the whole Scope of the Sermon, and from his Lordship's own Explanation of it, under this very Head, p. 16. where he opposes these TRIFLES, as he calls them, to *true Faith, Piety, Charity, and other Things that are of ABSOLUTE Necessity*; then nothing can be more groundless in it self, or more injurious to Religion, and the Souls of Men.

For it is not True that Rites and Ceremonies, &c. are *no way necessary*; nor is it True that all Questions and Debates about them should be excluded from Religion. And by the Way, I desire my Reader not to overlook the grand Solecism couched in this Proposition; His Lordship would have no *Questions or Disputes* but about Things so absolutely necessary to Salvation, that there can be no *Dispute* at all about them. And in the very following Lines, he wou'd have no *Religious Controversies*; About what? Why, about what is no Religion at all?

I must take the Liberty of saying what will appear a strange Thing to his Lordship, tho' directly contrary to this Proposition, and to the whole Drift and Tendency of this Sermon; as well as to his constant Application of that Text, *Where there is no Law, there is no Transgression*; namely, That all *Questions and Disputes* in Religion are most proper about Rites and Ceremonies, and such Points of Faith and Practice as are not expressly, and fully, and clearly determined in the Com-

mands of God himself; and therefore left to the Decision of the best Reason of Man from general Rules of Scripture, assisted by the ordinary Grace of God. And for this very Reason it is that our Holy Church (which God preserve) in her 20th Article asserts, That she *Hath not only Power to DECREE Rites and Ceremonies*; but that she *Hath Authority also in CONTROVERSIES OF FAITH*, without any other Limitation than that of her Decreeing nothing contrary to God's written Word. Not Authority to *make* Articles of Faith, I hope, as the Church of *Rome* doth; from whom we have separated for that Reason, and not for his Lordship's, which justifies our Sectaries separating from us; but in all Points, which admit of Question or Doubt, to decide which is right, or which is wrong; and what she so decides is a *Part* of Religion, and well worth disputing about. And her Rites and Ceremonies once Decreed and Ordain'd for the publick Service of God, being from that Time, Parts of her Religious Worship, agreeable to general Rules and Examples of Scripture, and Primitive Doctrine and Practice, are well worth the *Number and Bulk of such Books* as have been wrote in Defence of them; all which his Lordship explodes not without great Contempt by this one very dubious, not to say captious Question, * *Is this necessary to Salvation? And is this necessary to Salvation?*

Had all those Holy and Vertuous Men, who have labour'd in Defence of these *Trifles* in his

Lordship's Language, with so much Zeal and Learning, been endu'd with the like excess of Moderation, and obliging Temper with his Lordship towards those who are *without*, and have been as industrious in railing at, and disputing against them; this goodly *Fabrick* of our Establish'd Church had been how a heap of Ruin and Desolation.

But why must there be no Questions or Disputes about Rites and Ceremonies, Church-Articles, &c. because St. Paul says, Tit. 3. 8, 9. *Be careful to maintain good Works, for these Things are good and profitable unto Men; therefore Ceremonies, &c. are unprofitable.* Again, we must avoid foolish Questions and Genealogies, and Contentions, and Strivings about the Law: Therefore since Genealogies are unprofitable and vain, all Questions about Rites and Ceremonies, &c. are so. Hear my Lord again yet farther. *Foolish and unlearned Questions avoid, knowing that they do gender Strife; therefore all Questions about Ceremonies, or Points of Faith and Practice, not determin'd beyond Question in the plain Commands of God himself, absolutely necessary, perpetual, immutable, &c. are foolish and unlearned.* Take Dr. † Beveridge's Answer, who in direct Opposition to all this affirms, *That there is nothing in our Liturgy but what is necessary for our Edification; no such Fables or endless Genealogies; — none of these vain Disputations and impertinent Controversies, which have of late been rais'd in the Church, to its great Disturbance rather than its Edification.*

† Sermon on the Common-Prayer.

Now

Now if such plain Proofs of Scripture doth not convince you, hear the Heathen Fable of *Atalanta*, made Christian by the Moral of it, p. 16. She was a *Virgin* as yet pure, and no way debauch'd and corrupted, either with *Rites* or *Ceremonies*, or *Controversies* of Faith or Practice, *Church-Articles*, *Decisions* of *Councils*, *Opinions* of *Doctors*, and *Fathers* or *Casuits*, &c. which made her so light of Foot that she outran all Mankind in the Race that was before her. A subtil Courtier observing, that while she Incumber'd her self with nothing but the plain *Commands* of God himself, things absolutely necessary, perpetual, unchangeable, &c. no Body was ever like to outrun her; that he might get the better of her, throws in her Way those afore-said unnecessary *Circumstantial Trifles* in the Shape of *GAY GOLDEN Apples*. Unhappy she, thinking all was Gold that glister'd, stoops to gather them up; the other outstript her, got the Victory, and made her his own. His Lordship tells you immediately, that this cunning Sophister in the Fable is the † Devil, cloth'd

† I can't but observe here how opposite this is to Dr. Beveridge, who says, *The Devil hath had a spight against the Common Prayer, ever since it was first made. For the more edifying it is to God's People, the more destructive it must needs be of the Devil's Kingdom. And therefore it is no wonder that he hath all along employ'd the utmost of his Power and Policy to blast its Reputation, and so to discourage and dissuade Men from the Use of it. And by the Permission of God, for the Punishment of this ungrateful Nation, he hath so far prevail'd in his Design, that the Liturgy hath been twice cast out of the Church, since it was first brought into it; once in the Reign of Queen Mary, and then again in the Days of King Charles the First.* (Serm. on the Com. Prayer.)

in the Disguise of these *Circumstances*; who in our *Christian Course* raises our vain Curiosity, by starting a Number of subtil, tho' useless Questions about that tawdry Dress only, and Fashion of Religion: And whilst our Minds are too much busied about these Trifles, we neglect True Faith, Piety, Charity, and other Things that are of absolute Necessity.

It was with a Gay, goodly looking Apple that the old Serpent tempted *Adam* and *Eve*; and this sort of Reasoning would almost incline an Ignorant and Illiterate Person to look upon it as some *Rite* or *Ceremony*, which our first Parents fatally mistook for Religion. He would think his Lordship was warning him of the same Bait laid for all their Posterity, and therefore nothing in this World could scar and frighten him like a *Circumstance*.

This Notion of a stark naked Religion, which hath so filled his Lordship's Imagination, that he pursues it warmly in every thing he publisheth, might do well enough in *Theory* only, and is futable indeed to a State of perfect *Innocence*; but is no way adapted to the present great Degeneracy of Human Nature. God himself, who immediately upon the fall of our First Parents, provided them with a Covering; hath thereby furnish'd us with a lively Emblem of this Garb of Religion, which consists in *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, &c. 'Tis a plain Indication, how absolutely necessary they are to our now miserable Condition of *Corruption* and *Infirmity*; not only to defend Religion from all *External Injuries*, from *Heresy* and *Schism*; but to Cherish and Adorn It, and
to

to preserve in it even Life and Warmth. And he who goes about to raise in Men a contemptible Notion of Them, by arguing that they are no more to Religion than a few Fig-Leaves are to the Body, falls in exactly with the great Principle of the *Adamites*, who, thro' a vain Affectation of *Perfection*, and ridiculous Mimickry of our first and purest State, would have Mankind throw off all their *Clothing*, and expose their Shame.

Since, I hope by this Time, it appears that *Liturgies*, *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, *Articles*, &c. and particularly those of our Church, are so far from being *Letts* and *Hinderances* in our Christian Course, that on the quite contrary they are necessary Helps; and tend to excite our speed, and further us in our Way to Heaven. Since it is by these that Religion exerts it self with Life and Vigour; and that there could not be even a Visibilty or Face of it in the World without them; since it is by these, that all the wild and fantastical Opinions of *Hereticks*, *Schismaticks*, and all sorts of *Enthusiasts* are excluded from Religion; and that by them all Vertue and Goodness is promoted, and that true Devotion and Piety are quicken'd and exalted; and in short that there can be no *Order*, or *Decency*, or *Edification* among Christians without them: For these Reasons, and many more, I think it will be but a very reasonable Concession in the most prejudic'd Persons to grant, That these things are to Religion, at least as H A I R is to the Body; and upon that Condition I shall tell them this true Story Instead of a Fable.

There

There was once a certain Person, of whom we have this true and wonderful Account; that tho' he had all the Parts and just Proportion of a Man, yet his *Great* and even *Miraculous* Strength (which was the actual Support of God's Church and People in those Days) lay all in his H A I R. This Man, and the true *Religion*, were safe from all but a *Bosom* Enemy, one *Delilah*, a *Fawning*, *Mercenary*, *Treacherous* Curtezan; who by smooth and fair Speeches, and under colour of great Affection and Tenderneſs, but in truth dazl'd with the Luſtre of Gay Golden Apples thrown in her Way, beguil'd and deluded Him a *First*, *Second* and *Third* Time; at laſt *lull'd* him aſleep in her Lap; then inſenſibly ſhav'd off all his Hair, for it was but a *Circumſtance*; and ſurely no one could call that a cutting of his Throat. Which point was no ſooner gain'd, but the *Philiftines* were upon him; he all at once became Helpleſs and Feeble; and the inveterate, ſworn Enemies of the true Religion bound him Hand and Foot, carry'd him away Captive, put out his Eyes, and treated him with all the *Contempt* and *Barbarity* that deliberate Malice and irreconcilable Hatred could ſuggeſt; by which Means God's Church and People were, for a Courſe of many Years, ſore afflicted. Inſomuch that the Confuſion and Diſtraction of the Times which thereupon enſu'd, are handed down to us under this Character, That *in thoſe Days there was no King in Iſrael, but every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes*. And, as you have

have it fully in the Story of † *Micha*, every one had the chusing of his own *Circumstances* for Religion.

This *Doleful Tragedy* was acted, not many Years ago, with no small Improvement of the Design; and set off with very dark and gloomy Scenes: As fully appears thro' the *Lord Clarendon's History*, where you will find the Contempt of our Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies, &c. and of such of the Clergy as appear'd in Defence of them, the chief Cause of the Rise and Progress of the great Rebellion. From thence we learn, that it was the many *Yielding, Condescending, Betraying Prologues*, daily publish'd by the *Gentle, Complying, Moderate* Authors of those Times, which Amus'd and Beguil'd many of the Members, even of the True Church; and Reconciled Them gradually to *Changes and Alterations* of Things in the Worship of God; which could not be changed but for the Worse. By which Means Men were Insensibly led on without Suspicion, from one Scene to another, 'till the opening of the Plot; which ended in Rapine and Murder, Sacrilege and Regicide; in the confounding of all Things Sacred and Civil: Infomuch that *Abominable, Hard-hearted, and Pharisaical Hypocrisy* took full Possession of the Pulpit, and the Throne.

Having now done with my Observations upon the Sermon, I shall beg leave to offer some few Things to his Lordship's most *Serious Consideration*, beseeching him to observe his

† *Judges 17, 18 Chapters.*

own Rule * *Not to shut his Ears against any Thing that is offered by another, whosoever he is, nor in the least to endeavour to assent or dissent from any Thing, because this or that Man hath said it, but as after Impartial Consideration there appears to be just Reason to conclude it to be either True or False.*

1. And first, I would mind his Lordship of that *Unfeigned Assent and Consent*, which he hath solemnly *Declared to, ALL and EVERY* of those Things, which in this Sermon he plainly and expressly *Renounces* from being any *Part* of the Religion of our National Church; and to which he will not allow that *Title and Character* he then gave them in the more immediate Presence of God, and of the Congregation; but instead thereof, substitutes those blasting Denominations of *Trifles and Circumstances*; and represents them by no more favourable Similitudes than that of *CLOATHS*; which tho' People are apt to be proud of, are at best but gaudy Shreds, which may be *off* or *on*, when you please; and which we may change as a Man would a *Gown* for a *Cloak*; and by that of *Gay Gilded Pills of Poyson*, which the *Devil* hath prepared for Men to swallow. And this in such direct opposition to the Sense and Judgment of our *Legislature*, that the failing in the Performance of this *Assent*, is Deprivation, *ipso facto*.

2. I would lay before him that Question which was put to him upon a more sacred and solemn Occasion, at the Time of his Ordination to the

* *Plain and Easy Method*, Sec. par. 33.

Office of Priesthood. Will you then give your FAITHFUL DILIGENCE always so to Minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Law hath Commanded, and as THIS CHURCH AND REALM HATH RECEIVED THE SAME according to the Commandments of God; so that you may teach the People committed to your Care and Charge, with all Diligence to KEEP and OBSERVE the same? Upon which, I shall only leave it to his Lordship to judge Impartially, whether that Sermon, with many other Things in his Plain and Easy Method, whereby a Man may have full Satisfaction in ALL Things that concern his everlasting Salvation, be a faithful and diligent Discharge of that Promise, made to the Holy Ghost, of teaching People to keep and observe the Doctrine, and Sacraments, and Discipline of Christ AS THIS CHURCH AND REALM HATH RECEIVED THE SAME? Or whether it doth not, from Beginning to Ending, tend to a quite contrary End and Purpose?

3. Thirdly, I would recommend it as no inconsiderable Head of Self-Examination upon this Occasion, Whether his Lordship was not made a Member of Christ's visible Body, the Catholick Church, by being Baptiz'd and Receiv'd into this National Church of Ireland, which is a pure and untainted Part of it? Is not she his Mother, from whom he suck'd the Faith of Christ, and Pure Milk of the Word, without Mixture of Idolatry or Superstition; and free from all Taint and Corruption of Heretical Opinions, Schismatical Practices, and wild

wild Enthusiastick Notions? Was it not in her Bosom he was Nourish'd, and brought up to be not only a true *Member* of Christ, but admitted first a *Deacon*, after that a *Priest*; and now made Partaker of that invaluable Dignity of being a Successor of the Apostles? And all this as he himself hath acknowledg'd in another Answer, *According to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ; And the ORDER OF THIS CHURCH OF IRELAND?* The Return which his Lordship is bound under all the most sacred Ties of Conscience and Gratitude to make is, That of unfeigned daily Thanksgiving to God for such a signal Providence, in calling him to be thus a Member of the *Purest* and most *Primitive* Church upon Earth; together with his utmost Diligence and Endeavour for the Security and Establishment of it; and for transmitting all these blessed Advantages unimpair'd to Posterity.

But how is this Sermon a Discharge and Performance of that Duty? which promotes such Distinctions and Similitudes, and enlargeth upon them, as tend to unravel our whole Constitution; to beat down all its strong Holds, and lay all its Inclosures level with the Ground. Such as insinuate into the Mind of every incautious and illiterate Reader, that the whole Profession of the Churches of *England* and *Ireland* is but a Circumstantial Religion; its Ordinances all Circumstantially celebrated; nay, that he himself is but a Circumstantial Bishop; that he *Prays* in publick, and *Blesseth*, and *Consecrates*, and *Receives* the Eucharist Circumstantially; and that it

is a Matter of no great Importance to Eternal Salvation, among what Sect or Denomination of the Reform'd Religion all this is perform'd.

4. I heartily wish his Lordship may seriously Reflect, how Opposite and Contradictory he hath acted in this Sermon, as well as * else where, to those Holy and Learned Patriots of our Church, who have, with great Zeal and Strength of Argument, defended that excellently Constituted Form of *Doctrine*, and intire settled Order of *Discipline* and *Worship*, which He hath given up all at once; and blacken'd all their Labours of that kind under the Character of † *Volumes of Religious Controversies*, publish'd to the DISTURBANCE and DISTRACTION of the World.

That excellent Liturgy, which as Dr. ¶ *Hammond* observes, was first written in Blood, and sealed and delivered down to us by the Martyrdom of most of the Compilers of it; contriv'd with such excellent Wisdom and Foresight, That in all the Reproaches vented by its Enemies, ever-since, nothing but AIR and VAPOUR, says he, hath been vomited out against it; the result only of IGNORANCE and MALICE. And which the Great || *Beveridge* shews to have been a mighty Fence, not only against *Popish Doctrines* and *Superstition*, but against all Schismatical Errors and Enthusiastical Principles; and hath been

* See Paragraph 43, 44, and many other Places thro' his Lordship's *Plain and Easy Method*, &c.

† Pag. 15. ¶ Pref. to the View of the New Direct.

|| Sermon on the Common Prayer.

the great Means of keeping up the Knowledge and Face of True Religion among us; as witness that Inundation of Fanaticism, and Confusion which over-spread these Nations, upon the diffuse and intermission of it. If this BULWARK, says he, was once removed (which God forbid) our grand Adversary would soon Accomplish his Malicious Designs upon us, one way or other. In another place of that Sermon he hath this saying, Certainly if ever there was a Form of sound Words compos'd by Men since the Apostles Times, our Common Prayer may justly deserve that Title. And again, by what kind of Spirit the Common Prayer was then (Reign of King Charles the First) cast out, you all know; and some of you found by woful Experience. All I shall say of it is only this, That the same Spirit which then stir'd up People so violently against the Common Prayer, stir'd them up at the same Time to REBEL against their King, to take away Mens ESTATES and LIVES, contrary to all Law and Justice; and at last to Murther one of the most pious Princes that ever Liv'd. And whether that was the Spirit of Christ, or Antichrist, God or the Devil, judge you. In short, that excellent Constitution, which Foreign Churches have Applauded and wish'd for; and which the most Judicious and Pious Divines of our own Church, all but such as are Infected with a preposterous Notion of Moderation, have attributed to a more immediate Direction and Influence of the Holy Spirit of God. And particularly the same learned Man, who speaking of the Prudence, as well as Piety of our first Reformers and Compilers of our Liturgy, it follows, Which I can-

not but ascribe to the same extraordinary Aid and Assistance from God, whereby they were afterwards enabled to suffer Persecution, nay, Martyrdom it self ——— to confirm what they have done with their own Blood. I shall add here that Saying of Bishop * Sanderson's, who, Discourſing of that Christian Liberty of appointing Rites and Ceremonies, &c. and of requiring a Religious Obſervance of them; and of ſuch as unworthily betray it away, ſays, Besides theſe, that do it thus by open Assault, I would there were not others alſo, that did by ſecret Underminings go about to deprive us of that Liberty, which we have in Chriſt Jeſus, even then when they moſt pretend the Maintenance of it. And in the ſame Diſcourſe he aſſerts, It is our Duty, for the better ſecuring of our ſelves, as well againſt thoſe open Impugners, as againſt theſe ſecret Underminers, to look heedfully to our Trenches and Fortifications, and to ſtand faſt in that Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free; leſt by ſome Device or other we be liſted out of it; ——— leſt we be enſnared by our own Default, e'er we are aware ——— for we ſometimes betray away our own Liberty, when we might Maintain it.

If the Opinions of ſingle Men be not of ſufficient Weight, take the Reſult of King James the Firſt, and his Council, after the Conference at Hampton-Court † It Appears to us, and our Council, that there was no Cauſe why any Change ſhould have been at all in that which was Impugned

* Sermon on 1 Pet. 2. 16.

† Proclamation of K. James 1st, for Author, &c.

the Book of Common-Prayer — Neither in the
Doctrine which appeared to be Sincere; Nor in the
Forms and Rites, which were justified out of the
Practice of the Primitive Church. And this in the
same Proclamation is said to have been the
Sense of all the Bishops present.

In another Proclamation enforcing the for-
 mer, 'tis said, That, After so much Impugning,
 there appeareth no Cause why the Form of the Ser-
 vice of God, wherein they have been Nourished so
 many Tears, should be Changed. And therefore
 adviseth his Subjects, Not to listen to the trou-
 blefome Spirits of some Persons who never receive
 Contentment, either in CIVIL or ECCLE-
 SIASTICAL Matters, but in their own Fan-
 tasies. Especially, certain Ministers, who under pre-
 tended Zeal of Reformation, are the chief Authors of
 Divisions and Sects among the People.

I shall add here the Opinion of all the Bi-
 shops Appointed for the Savoy Conference.
 * We judge, that if the Liturgy should be altered,
 as is required, not only a Multitude, but the gene-
 rality of the Soberest and most Loyal Children of
 the Church of England would be justly Offended;
 since such an Alteration would be a virtual Conces-
 sion, that this Liturgy were an intolerable Burden to
 tender Consciences, a direct Cause of Schism; and
 a superstitious Usage, (upon which Pretence it is
 here desired to be Altered). Which would at once
 both justify all those who have so Obstinately Sepa-
 rated from it, as the only Pious Tender Conscienc'd
 Men; and condemn all those who have Adher'd to

* Answer to the Presbyter. Exceptions, Sect. 6.

That, in Conscience of their Duty and Loyalty, with their Loss or Hazard of Estates, Lives and Fortunes, as Men Superstitious, Schismatical, and void of Religion and Conscience.

Where can be the Safety, or the Comfort of his Lordship's Soul, in running directly counter to all these, and as much as in him lies to undo all that they have done? To fall in with the Sentiments and strongest Prejudices of the sworn inveterate Enemies of our Constitution, who have been as industrious in calumniating and reviling it; and to clinch the only Argument which they have all along insisted upon for a Colour of their inexcusable Separation? His Lordship's not being *Express*, and *Clear*, and *Open* in all that his Sermon drives at; and his pursuing the Designs of it more *Covertly*, and by *Insinuations* only, is so far from being any *Excuse*, that 'tis a high *Aggravation* of his Performance: Not only because 'tis from thence plain, that he pursues such Ends as he is *asham'd* or *afraid* to own more plainly; but because the more *Obscure* and *Dark* a Man's Insinuations are, the harder it is to lay them open; to expose them in a clear Light; and consequently more difficult to Ward against all that Mischief they are calculated to Effect; and to prevent the malignant Influences of them upon the Consciences of Men.

Had his Lordship spoke out all at once, what this Sermon goes about softly Whispering in the Ears of all People, namely, That our Constitution might be Altered much for the better; That the *Gallican*, or any other
Litur-

Liturgy, is more agreeable to *Primitive Purity and Practice* than our own; That the Church and Churchmen lay too great a Stress upon Rites and Ceremonies, *Liturgy*, *Articles*, &c. that they insist too rigorously upon them; that they ought to part with many of these Circumstances in condescension to tender Consciences; and that it were a blessed Thing to mix the *Common-Prayer* and *Directory* in order to a *Comprehension*, &c. this would have shock'd and startled all that heard, or read him: And yet there is, in truth and reality, no more difference between these Two, than there is between saying the same Thing over in a *Laud*, or a *Low Voice*. 'Tis letting the Enemies of the Church in at a *Back Door*; which in point of Conscience is the same with actually preparing a *Breach*, or laying the *Gates* wide open; for the *first* is a sufficient Indication, that the *later* is to be done, whenever it may be perform'd with Credit and Safety.

5. I would observe that this Sermon, and all his Lordship's Opinions, which seem design'd to prepare the way for a *Comprehension*, proceed upon this wrong Supposition, That our Separatists have all the Parts of Religion, and differ from us only in Circumstances; whereas some of them hold Doctrines, not only Heretical, but such as are destructive of *Christianity* it self; and the *Visibility* of the Christian Church. And even the *Presbyterians*, who are by these Distinctions and Similitudes insinuated to have all the *Parts* of Religion, have many Tenets directly contrary to plain Scripture.

They do not retain among them so much as One of the Three Holy Orders of *Bishop*, *Prefbyter* or *Elder*, and *Deacon*, mention'd in the New Testament. The first they reject as *Antichrist*; the second they have sacrilegiously taken away from the Clergy, and Confer'd it upon the *Laitie*; nor have they any Order among them of the third *Denomination*. They are down-right Fatalists, holding *Absolute* Decrees of Election and Reprobation, upon which they stick not to call themselves the *Elect*; and pursuant to this, they explain all St. Paul's Discourse, thro' the 7th Chapter of the *Romans*, in the Person of a *Regenerate* Man. They take upon them the *Administration* of the Word and Sacraments, with the Exercise of a *Spiritual Jurisdiction*, without any Commission from God, either in the ordinary way of *Succession*, or by a *Miraculous Mission*. They hold the Continuance of the *Extraordinary Effusion* of the Spirit for extempore Prayer and Preaching; which fond Opinion hath made them Renounce all *premeditated* and *prescrib'd* Forms of Publick Worship; hath banish'd the *Reading* of the Scripture out of their Congregations; and hath brought even the *Lord's Prayer* much into Contempt and Disuse among them. They hold that Separation from an establish'd National Church, with which they may communicate without Sin, and setting up distinct Communions of their own, is not the Sin of *Schism*. They will not perform the most *Solemn Act* of Christian Worship in a posture of *Adoration*; and maintain all use of *Instrumental*

tal Musick, in the Service of God, to be unlawful. Their great Principle is, That all Rites and Ceremonies become unlawful, when they are once Ordain'd as Conditions of Church Communion, and a conscientious Discharge of them requir'd; because by that Means they become Parts of Religion, and they would have them, in his Lordship's Phrase, only * *Articles of Peace*; and their constant Cry, in Opposition to our whole Constitution, is the *Commands of God*; *The Law of the Gospel*, &c. Now where can be the Advantage to our own true Religion, or to the Souls of those who separate from it, to do that which should encourage and confirm them in *These and Other dangerous Errors*; of such a Nature that they cut off all possibility of any Comprehension but by their Conviction; and thereby being dispos'd to part with them, and embrace the Truth? Which they themselves have been always so sensible of, that they † never could be induc'd, and in all likelihood never will, to propose any Terms upon which they would Unite, tho' this is a grievous Aggravation of their *Schism*, and leaves them without any other Excuse or Apology, but that of invincible Ignorance, in the sight of God and Man.

Now for his Lordship, with Respect to this Complication of Heretical and Schismatical Opinions and Practices, to be as a Man whose

* Plain and Easy Method. Par. 43.

† Witness the *Savoy Conference*.

Words are softer than Butter, and in whose Mouth are no Reproofs. To daub on anew that very *Paint and Varnish*, which Men of Piety and Learning have been long washing off from the Face of a groundless and monstrous Schism, that it might be left exposed to all Mankind in its genuine Deformity. Not only to insinuate, that any of the *Sectaries*, have all the necessary Parts of Religion; but to take so much Pains to shew how Rites and Ceremonies are in themselves *Unnecessary*, without shewing how they became *Necessary* to them: I ask whether this was performing the Part of a faithful *Pastor*? And whether it was not his indispensable Duty, to have told them that they held several Opinions directly contrary to the plain Word of God; Dangerous to Mens Souls, and destructive of all Vertue and Goodness; and that there could be no *Comprehension* without their Conviction and Repentance. And to have taught them, that tho' Rites and Ceremonies are not the *Immediate* Commands of God, yet they are his *Mediate* Commands, being appointed by such as have the *Rule over them*, and therefore that in disobeying they run a manifest Hazard of their Salvation.

6. But the most melancholy Reflection of all, and that which must affect his Lordship with the deepest Sorrow and Regret, when the Strength of that mighty Prejudice he is under is abated, is the manifold Evil *Effects* of this Sermon, the *Immense* Mischief it hath done in Two Kingdoms; and how much it is now out of his Power to undo it, and make
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sufficient Reparation for the Injury our Church and Constitution have suffer'd from it. His Lordship can't but be sensible what an *Irreversible* Aversion all our Separatists already have, not only to our *Rites* and *Ceremonies*; but to many *Doctrinal* Points decided and explain'd in our *Articles* and *Homilies*; as well as to the whole *Discipline* of our Church: And what could he propose by all this *Yielding*, those many *unfair Concessions* which he hath made; unless it be an Acknowledgement that their contrary Pretensions are true? That they are in the right, and we in the wrong? Do they ever make any other use of our *Concessions*, but to *upbraid* us with our own Words; to cast them in our Teeth, and play us against one another? as they will the *Bishop* against *Himself*, if ever they find he recedes one Tittle from what he hath preach'd and printed not only in his *Sermon*, but in his *Plain and Easy Method*, &c. and in his * *Rule of Self-Examination*, where he hath spoke out, and reckons *Heresy* and *Schism* among those *Terms of Art* which are only an *Amusement*, and *Perplex Men with Doubts and Scruples*. †

They reckon every Condescension we make, as so much *Ground* gain'd against an *Enemy*; but never could be perswaded to move one

* Pag. 9.

† 'Tis somewhat surprizing how exactly parallel this is to that Saying of Sir *Richard Steel's*, viz. *That we have all sufficiently felt the Load of the two Topicks of Heresy and Schism. And yet all this hath not made us sick of these two Words. Dedic. to the Pope.* But they both ought to have considered that these are Scripture-Terms, and from thence transferr'd into our Litany.

step forward to meet us as *Friends*. They never come to hear any of our Preachers, or express the least value for them, but such as have got the Character of being *Luke-warm* and *Indifferent* to their own Communion, and have some *Taint* of Fanaticism: And these are always reckon'd to have just so much of the *Saint* in them, as they have a want of Zeal and Stedfastness to the Establish'd Church; and as they are more or less dispos'd to betray our whole Constitution; and even their own Order into the Hands of its implacable Enemies. What other Tendency then can all things of this nature have, but to strengthen their Party; to establish Them in their *Schism*, but scandalize those of our own Church, and fill them with Doubts and Scruples? To give the Separatists Heart and Courage, and Opportunities of catching at all Advantages against us? Confirming that irreconcilable Aversion of theirs to our *Doctrines*, *Rites*, and *Ceremonies*, which is the Ground of their Separation; the Cause of infinite Calamities, and of a Series of dismal Consequences to Church and State? And in short, to raise up that Evil Spirit of *Faction*, and *Schism*, and *Enthusiasm*, which too many of our own Church and Communion will never suffer to be intirely laid, and confin'd to its own dark Retirement, the Regions of Error and Delusion; but will have it always ready to be *Conjur'd* up upon every appearance of a seasonable and secular Advantage; tho' this be, in truth, no other than laying aside the *Providence* of God, and going to the *Devil* for Help.

Now that all true *Sons*, and *Fathers* of the Church may beware of that false Colour and Shadow only of true Christian Moderation, by which so many are deceived; I shall in the last place observe, how void of a true Spirit of Christianity, and a sincere Zeal for the Glory of God and his true Religion that *Topick* is, upon which the Reasoning and Arguments of those Men proceed, who are all for Yielding, and Compliance, and Condescension, and Toleration, and Encouragement towards Separatists; and who are ever directly or indirectly promoting Changes and Alterations in our Establish'd Religion: Namely, because 'tis for the *Peace* and *Security* of the State; the *Prosperity* of the Nation; nay, and for the Advancement of *Trade* and *Commerce*. The *Sectaries*, say they, are a powerful Party; not to be disoblig'd, but courted and won upon, lest they give us up to the common Enemy. Therefore *This*, and *That*, and *'Tother* Thing moved for the Security of the Church, &c. is indeed a very good Thing in it self, and may do well another Time; but we must wait for a more favourable Juncture; we dread the Consequences of doing our Duty now. The Season calls for Condescension and Compliance, and giving up some Parts of our Constitution, they are all but Circumstances; and what a glorious Prospect have we, from so small Concession, of being all one People, and a flourishing and happy Nation?

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This may be the Language of a Politician, but not of a Christian; and surely this is forsaking of God and our indispensable Duty to him, and using unlawful Means to bring to pass the Ends of Providence; 'tis the doing Evil, that Good may come of it. Nothing hath been so fatal to Religion, as the mingling it with human Policy, it is not seasonable; it must not be discover'd all at once, but open by degrees, and work insensibly; we may spoil a good Scheme, &c. is the Language of the World; but *in Season, out of Season* is the Language of the Scripture. Matters of Conscience and Religion are to be own'd and declar'd, and put in practice at all Times; and then more especially when in the Eye of the World they are least in Season: And the Consequence is, That all who are not sound at the Heart will oppose them; all who are sincerely Good will fall in with them; and the Success is in the Hands of God, who hath reserved the Disposal of all *Events* to himself, and left us only the Discharge of our *Duty*, with a firm Dependence upon him. If all good Men wou'd act by this steady Principle, Truth wou'd prevail at last; but it is ruin'd by Caution, betray'd by Policy and Cunning; and by being over-wise in Religion, Men become Fools.

To make a Change, says Dr. * Hammond in sacred Matters, meerly out of Intuition of our own secular Advantages, is PRACTICAL ATHEISM, and calls it *Sacrificing them to our present Conveniencies*. 'Tis *Atheism*, says he, in thinking that

* Tract. of Cha. of Church Govern.

God cannot blast that Convenience so acquired; And Infidelity or Distrust, in thinking that God will not in his Time give those Conveniences and Advantages (if they be such indeed) by Means perfectly lawful, which now we cover by unlawful. Therefore he observes how this is tempting God's Providence in not acquiescing in the present Liturgy, Rites and Ceremonies, which have hitherto prosper'd happily with us; and putting it to the Adventure whatsoever Inconveniencies the next may be subject to. 'Tis changing the certain Benefits of the one for the uncertain Advantages and PROBABLE CALAMITIES which may follow the breaking in upon the present Constitution; which may provoke God to punish us with greater and unexpected Curses. He calls it an Act of PRIDE and INSOLENCY to prefer any Scheme of Modern Invention beyond that which is already laid in our Church upon the Foundation of the Apostles, and Practice of the Primitive Church. I shall only put this Question in the Words of that † Learned Man, speaking of such as are sensible of those Sufferings of the Church only, wherein their Interests are involv'd. Will Men count the Invasion of the Revenues of the Church a SACRILEGE, a Calamity, a Sin unparallel'd; but think the Abolition of the Liturgy, or any part of it inconsiderable, and a Venial Sin? Remember that when there is a proper Juncture for it, there are but too many prepar'd to argue that the Revenues of the Church are but a Circumstance; And I leave those Men to find out an Answer or Evasion for this Question, who call

† Preface to the View of the New Direct.

See failing in their Zeal for the Defence and
Security of our Rules and Ceremonies, Arti-
cles, and whole Constitution; the preparing
the Minds of People to admit of Changes and
Alterations in them; and the giving Heart
and Encouragement to all the Enemies of
them, by the Name of Moderation.

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